The Mystery of Life

a secret inside secrets

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A Secret Inside Secrets, Selections from the books written by Allamah Muhammad Taqi Ja'fariThis book deals with a myriad of subjects related to human life: philosophy, .mysticism, anthropology, cultures, arts, history and much more

Acknowledgments

This is our first step into the world of great human beings who have understood the harmonious rhythm of the universe – and even become part of it. We feel obliged to thank the Mr. Abdullah Nasri, Mr. Shahram Ansari and Mr. Karim Feizi for helping to compile this book. We would also like to thank and Ms. Ruqayya Alizadeh for editing and proofreading the book and Ms. Roya Azizi Mousavi for setting its computer layout, .and Mr. M. Hemmathi for designing the cover of this book

The contents of this book have been compiled and selected from the following books :written by Allamah Ja'fari

- from a Scientific and Qur'anic Point of View, ۱۹۸۲

- A Study of the Philosophy of Science, ۱۹۹۲
- A Study and Critique of David Hume's Thoughts on Four Philosophical Issues, ۱۹۹۲
- A Study and critique of The Adventures of Ideas, ۱۹۹۱
- The Relationship between Man and the Universe, ۱۹۵۳
- A Study and Critique of the Russell-Wyatt Dialogs, ۱۹۶۴
- The Message of Wisdom, ۱۹۹۸
- An Interpretation and Critique of Rumi's Mathnavi (۱۵ vol.), ۱۹۶۹- ۱۹۷۳
- A Translation and Interpretation of the Nahj-ul-balaghah (۲۷ vol.), ۱۹۷۹-۱۹۹۸
- Conscience, ۱۹۶۶
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We would like to end this book by adding that we would highly appreciate any .suggestions readers of this book may wish to provide us with

Preface

In the ۱۹۲۳, a child was born in northwestern Iran who would a few decades later become, for his scientific efforts and profound writings, one of the greatest thinkers .of his time. His name was Muhammad Taqi Ja'fari

Though born in a family who were by no means rich – which created many problems inhibiting his progress in education and academic endeavors – he persisted, and it was his tireless persistence and stamina that turned him into one of the richest men of the East in knowledge and mysticism. He soon accumulated a huge treasure of .knowledge full of original, basic, innovative thoughts

Muhammad Taqi Ja'fari never studied at any university; yet, his ingenious, delicate mental endeavors lead to the creation of invaluable amounts of knowledge, particularly in fields such as philosophy, anthropology, ideology and analyzing modern .truths

Ja'fari began his formal education at theological schools and seminaries, but his academic career mostly involves comprehensive viewpoints with the context of .solving major ideological and philosophical dilemmas

Searching for topics and posing fundamental questions was the most prominent aspect of Allamah Ja'fari's mentality; thus, he was constantly searching, excavating into new worlds few

.had stepped into – at least, the way he stepped into them

His childhood was spent with his silent, boyish thoughts; his youth, however, involved studies mainly focusing on humanity and the universe. As time passed, these two .issues became more and more important to him, though his peers did not think so

His first book, The Relationship between Man and the Universe (The Change of Physical Mass in Man's Understanding from the Earliest Times up to the Twentieth Century), written in three volumes, showed how distinctive his way of thinking was; even though he was just a young man, he had begun a journey that he spent the rest of his life on – studying humanity, the universe and the facts that sacrifice the .universe for man and man for himself

By considering things from a novel point of view, Muhammad Taqi Ja’fari tended to use historical issues with a new definition and for a new purpose. This made him be much more than a pure philosopher; other scholars paid attention to his thoughts on .the basics of recognition and discovery and insights into science and philosophy

Still, he never stopped at that, and tried open up a new road by using the latest findings in the humanities and also experimental sciences like physics and mathematics. In fact, his questions about the mystery of life and his stops at stations like how evolutions arises in culture, the secrets about education helped him swiftly ”pass through the narrow road of “what there is

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.and “what there should be,” and see life as an elevation

That was when he reached a crucially fundamental domain called “intelligible life,” and then devoted all his capabilities into extracting a constructive truth out of obvious realities like culture, economics, science, history, philosophy, civilizations and technology that could save the world from falling into oblivion for the stormy hands of .those who lack balanced thinking

Since Ja’fari put a great deal of care into his work, and experienced and analyzed both Western and Eastern unsolved issues with incredible vigor and passion, and also probably due to his pioneer discoveries regarding issues where others failed, the .second half of his lifetime had him change into an internationally renowned thinker

Many Western scholars and thinkers from prominent universities all over the world

visited him and held talks and discussions with him – over ۱۰۰ major interviews, some of which have been published. Allamah Ja'fari and Bertrand Russell had correspondence with each other. Professor Rosenthal, Dr. Kenneth Alan Luther, Dr. Allal Al-fasi, Professor Gankowski, Professor Van Ess, Professor Koroda, Professor Muhammad Abdul-Salam, and many others were among those who came to Tehran .to hold discussions with Allamah Ja'fari

This book contains selections of but parts of the late Allamah's thoughts on some fundamental issues. It can be considered a way of thinking attempting to view truths from a new scope. Allamah Ja'fari's thoughts clearly show that he never confined himself to geographical boundaries; his main concern was mankind and the future – a future we

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.cannot afford to neglect

Those who knew him admit that he excelled at avoiding prejudiced or limited thoughts, and this book should also verify this fact – it is the cry of a thoughtful bird who sees the world as a garden to develop, fly and fly higher and higher in. He heeds us not to forget flying higher. Through his hundreds of comprehensive studies and analyses, he has told us that it is impossible to solve the mystery of life without .making it face eternity

Recognition in the Domain of Thoughts

The Possibility of Recognition

The basic question that first comes to mind is whether recognition is feasible or not? Ancient Greek Mystics believed that it is impossible to discover facts. Their reasons for :this include

Errors of Vision: When the recognizer has different viewpoints, the recognized -۱ points will also be different from one another. A high mountain appears to be a mere hill seen from far away, the rotating blades of a fan look like a circle, and railway lines

seem to meet in the distance, for our knowledge – as Laozi quotes from Niels Bohr – is the product of our watching and playing around in the universe; we gain knowledge via "the object for its own sake" to "the object for us." Such ways of reasoning are not acceptable, for a change in position or location would reveal the truth. By getting closer to the mountain, for instance, it will seem high to us once again. Sensory errors .can be compensated for by the other means

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If recognition is not feasible, the senses, mind and tools of experimentation must be .used to acquire various viewpoints needed for coming to a concrete conclusion

Conflicts in Findings: Those against the possibility of recognition believe that – ۲ different people have various points of view when identifying facts, and achieving unity in this matter is impossible. Man may be appealed by something today, but disgusted by it tomorrow. What seems extremely valuable to him today may prove worthless later. Such a conclusion is not acceptable, for conflicts in identifications either lies in observable affairs or human imagination. If the dispute arises from worldly affairs, it in fact proves that identification is real, for without it the mind would never react differently towards various facts. Conflicts in mental and sensory discoveries also convey that recognition is real, for the mind and the senses create .certain discoveries under certain circumstances and conditions

The Variability of the Universe: Some believe that the constant changes and – ۳ developments occurring in the universe and its components defies identification, for not only external facts, but also the human mind and senses undergo change, and .thus cannot fully reflect facts

The solution for this source of error is that change and progress in the two worlds – mental and physically observable– alongside identification shows that the main factor is something beyond the mind and the senses, and therefore is not prone to change. The mind and the senses merely serve as to transfer the knowledge to the discoverer ,– the self

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.soul, character, or spirit

What is reflected from the observable world into our mind is not well-defined – ۴ enough to be able to be compared with the facts and have the mental concepts matched with the external facts. Thus, we are not certain what there is also in the .mind – in other words, whether it is compatible with the world outside or not

In response to this problem, we must say that the human mind is capable of absorbing facts from the universe and also process them. This shows how powerful and significant the human mind is, not its incompetence. Sophists, however, imagined that the mind should be like a mirror that only reflects the facts, with no external .impression on them

The intimate relationship and dependency among the components of the universe –۵ has brought some to believe that ignorance toward just one part will lead to total ignorance. Such reasoning is applicable only to those who claim they have knowledge of absolutely everything, not considering the knowledge they gain from their tools for observing the external world as relative. However, there are cases of absolute knowledge, which do not fit into any form of logic or reason – "the universe is real and .follows certain laws," to name one

The Devices and Tools for Discovery and Gaining Knowledge

The Senses: Man's natural senses are his first tools for identification. His senses – ۱ provide him with a means to gain facts. Phenomena that find way into the human mind by means of natural senses to not remain the same as they

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are outside. A smell we sense, for example, is not the same when it has entered us. Likewise, when we taste something sweet and the message about it is transferred to our nervous system, our nerves will not exactly feel that sweetness. Our nerves do not turn into different colors when we see different colors, either. When we lift a

heavy object, our nerves do not become heavier. Therefore, we may conclude that having entered inside man, no phenomenon retains its identity. We undoubtedly have to eat something sweet to realize its sweet taste, but is the same sweet food passed on to our nervous cells? Furthermore, internal contents and conditions influenced by external factors can change the identity of the external factors, too. For instance, let's say we encounter a dead body. What we feel through our senses is the view of a dead person. If the dead body belongs to a close friend, it would cause sorrow, and if it belongs to an enemy it would delight us. Two different reactions to a single phenomenon; hence, how internal factors can influence our perception of external .facts

In fact, man's natural senses are justified through internal factors. In other words, phenomena that enter us through our senses are interpreted and accounted for by .man's own wishes and knowledge

۲ - Artificial Devices and Tools: Man has made tools and devices to help him explore nature and the universe. The invention of the telescope, the microscope, and many other

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devices has helped man discover phenomena he could never explore using his own senses. No matter how powerful these devices may become, they cannot eliminate the role of the senses and internal conditions; they cannot change the mind into a :mirror which passes things into humans exactly as they are. The reasons for this are

a) These tools and devices are man-made, so they are dependent upon man's .selection or elimination

b) What tools and devices reflect to man is limited to certain circumstances. For example, they reflect insect fur, the human body, mercury, leather and cement each in a different way. Any modification in the magnifying glass can influence the .appearance of the observed phenomena

c) Even if the artificial tools and devices reflect facts as they are, the internal passages they must go through will affect them, for they are being received by human senses and mind.

3- Man's innate talents and powers, such as intelligence, wisdom, imagination and thought can also serve as tools of discovery.

The Importance of Adjusting and Refining the Senses

Intellectuals studying identification and recognition have neglected the issue of adjusting and refining knowledge in both domains of the mind and in the real world. From the mental aspect, the function of the senses must be corrected, for any fault in the senses may deform the reality. Thus, man's internal management should take charge of adjusting the senses.

Apart from adjusting and refining the senses and tools that make possible the contact between man and facts, the mind also needs adjustment and refinement. Many powers are active

in the human mind – imagination, memory, abstraction, comparison, aesthetic search, association of concepts, and others – which can, if not functioning correctly, damage man's process of gathering facts.

The Factors that Influence Recognition and Identification

Recognition and identification, like other phenomena, have a cause. As a mental phenomenon, identification and recognition can be caused by these factors:

1- The involuntarily natural, primary recognition and identification by the senses and the mind: Man's mental structure shows a variety of mutual influences to and from facts, and identification is one of them. In other words, once the mind establishes contact with the world outside, the phenomena are reflected into the mind.

2- The need to continue life: Human life is not possible without knowledge and

discovery. Mental effort is the key to feeling what life really is like. This factor is also .fatalistic, however, for its necessity lies in the need to continue life

Selfishness: Man's selfishness makes him go after knowing things that are not -۳ crucial to his survival. There are various forms of human selfishness. When one considers oneself as the end and others as a means to the end, such a viewpoint will infiltrate all of his knowledge. Likewise, if man regards his identity as dependent upon other people in the society, his knowledge will definitely be much purer. The highest .level, of course, belongs to the one who moves along the path to perfection

Innate enthusiasm: mind.Man is innately eager to know more, and this is not merely -۴ .for his own benefit; it goes far beyond that

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Moral ethics: Moral ethics form one of the most important and most dignified factors in recognition. Moral ethics means activating every human aspect on the path toward the highest aim of life. It can make the truth flourish for man, which in turn can make gaining knowledge the means and the end of his life – as the means, discovering knowledge can help man gain the facts on his way to perfection; as an end, it involves .the expansion of man's identity in the universe

The arousal of love: Love can also cause knowledge and recognition. When love is -۶ the motive for the discovery, man will see the facts as beautiful. Discoveries based on .love ignore all logical reasoning

Belief: Belief refers to the mental state in which all events are considered in a -۷ special way. When one believes in the struggle for survival, for instance, it will make .the knowledge of power his first priority

There are two kinds of belief – dynamic and static. In static belief, man sees everything in a specific, fixed way. For example, if an intellectual considers man as virtually evil, he will also interpret everything else from this viewpoint, too. In dynamic

belief, however, man does not interpret all facts from a single, inflexible aspect; his .belief makes him able to accept other phenomena and facts as they really are

Faith: Faith is accepting the truth that is the most active element of the human -٨ character, and accounts for every aspect

of man's existence. The knowledge brought about by faith is the most soothing and motivating. Faith is a truth that shines on all of man's darkness in life like an immortal sun and can save his character from falling apart and multiplicity, and adjust his life by means of patterns of order and harmony. Faith makes every action carried out on the .path toward man's desired ideal feel like life itself

The Process of Recognition

The steps the human mind must go through in order to achieve discovery and :recognition are

Establishing contact between the mind and the fact: No knowledge can be gained -١ without making contact between the human mind and the truth, whether we believe that all knowledge potentially exists in the human mind, or believe that it is like a completely blank paper which can be affected by external facts. Physical phenomena, such as light, transfer facts from the outside into the mind. Facts pass through our .senses and enter our mind

Initial observation: The senses are exposed to many phenomena, but only some of -٢ them pass through the senses into the mind. In other words, the phenomena that we pay attention to can pass through the senses. Thus, purely natural reflection due to the openness of our senses cannot be a cause of gaining knowledge, for no conscious .attention is included in it

Attention: If man is appealed by what he notices, attention occurs. In other words, -٣ this step of the process is caused by either the attraction of the object

or the person's own inclination. Furthermore, the deeper the attention is, the readier .the mind will be to activate its forces about a subject

Indirect understanding: In this step, we try to somehow gain an understanding of -۴ the subject; otherwise, its knowledge will never be possible. However, our understanding will be indirect, for all phenomena are interrelated. When we see colors, for example, we need proper light. Our distance from the subject is also .significant

Direct understanding: In empirical sciences, where the subjects are analyzed, - ۵ researchers can gain direct understanding. In other words, the researcher can gain knowledge of the subject regardless of any relationship it may have with other phenomena. However, we must keep in mind that phenomena are interrelated, and each can be studied in different ways. The mutual interactions between phenomena reveal various identities for each, and a direct understanding of a phenomenon may .not necessarily include its whole identity

Direct grasp: Here, by "surrounding" we mean all-around understanding of subjects -۶ – it engulfs every aspect of the subject. However, in most cases of knowledge we are concerned with complete knowledge of one specific subject, not surrounding all aspects around it, too, for each field of science tend to study a particular aspect of a .phenomenon

Indirect grasp: Surrounding the effect by means of knowing about the cause. - ۷ Usually, the human mind is influenced by the previous pieces of knowledge it has gained, and finds it quite hard to achieve a pure, absolute, direct grasp of the

subject without being affected by the previous ones. Say, for instance, that we look at a bright light and then try to know what color something is; the difference in quality ".between the bright light and the color will affect our knowledge of the color

Different Forms of Knowledge and Recognition

There are various ways for knowledge and recognition to take place, for the human mind can make contact with the facts in different ways:

۱- Purely Educational Knowledge: When knowledge happens in the mind in a purely educational situation, not only is it an absolutely reflective process, but is also accompanied by two other kinds of knowledge: ۱) the teacher teaches what he knows; ۲) the truth is what I am learning. The risk this kind of knowledge includes is that the learner learns anything he is taught, without any consideration or thought. Learning different things from different scholars may throw the learner into confusion. The other risk is the weakening of the learner's own mental productivity. These are issues teachers must avoid while teaching.

۲- Purely Developmental Knowledge: In this kind of development-included knowledge, the trainer inducts a series of concepts and realities to the trainee. If logical principles are observed during the training, the knowledge gained will also be deeper and longer-lasting, for it will be the result of change and contact with facts. For instance, when one correctly learns that telling the truth is necessary at all times, he will also be more profoundly interested in telling the truth, too. He feels the practical essence

to tell the truth, which he believes will develop his character. The principles that say the practical element is more important than knowledge in human development does not mean that practical usage without knowledge is necessary; it means, in fact, that the important thing in human development is practical, knowledge-based development and change, not mere abstract knowledge piled up in the researcher's mind.

۳- Imitational Knowledge: Imitation means accepting another person's words, actions, behavior and thoughts without any reason. Imitation consists of five elements:

a) The imitator

b) The imitated

c) The phenomenon or reality being imitated

d) The aim of the imitation

e) The credibility of the imitation

Some imitations are completely distinctive of original knowledge, whereas some others are not. Detectable imitations are harmless to human knowledge, but the ones not detectable can be quite dangerous. Some detectable imitations are, nevertheless, .necessary, like consulting an expert

Supposed Knowledge: In supposed knowledge, there is no observable evidence, - ۴ and the researcher must take the relevant mental conditions and concepts into .consideration

Theoretical knowledge: Here, some of the knowledge is compatible with - ۵ researchable items, but the whole issue cannot be interpreted by means of experimental evidence. These two forms of knowledge sometimes make scientific knowledge fade a little. Mixing suppositions and theories with scientific laws may cause little harm in issues concerning the observable world, but applying them to the humanities may bring about irreparable harm to human culture, as the theory of the originality of the sexual instinct did in interpreting human life, inhibiting man's evolution and

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.changing all human values

Purely Descriptive Knowledge: This kind of knowledge tends to set light on the facts -۶ in order to provide a bridge between the initial contact with the facts and the stage of true recognition. In the initial step, man merely photographs the facts, but in descriptive knowledge, facts are described from all viewpoints. The descriptions are

sometimes so interesting that the initial state of mind feels that the original .knowledge is not necessary, and this can make human thoughts stagnant

Worship-based Knowledge: This form of knowledge concerns issues for which man -۷ does not know the reason, although they have reasons. For instance, man follows the rules he is instructed on how to worship God, and the reasons behind them are not completely unknown taking the aim of human life into consideration; they use their .intelligible contents to adjust the relationship between man and God

Experimental Knowledge: This kind of knowledge is not limited to the phenomena -۸ and relationships in the world of nature, for rather than testing an observable fact by means of human senses or laboratory devices in order to study it, experiencing something means exploration efforts about facts, and can apply to the analysis of :these issues

a) The experimenter, who possesses healthy senses and mental activities and is .capable of making contact with facts

.b) Accepting definitely certain principles, like the principle of causality

.c) The motive of experiment in order to identify phenomena and make use of them

d) The phenomenon or relationship being experienced to identify

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it is real, not imaginary or baselessly assumed. Realities are far vaster than our senses and observations can handle. Today science uses radioactive research to explore galactic changes millions of years ago in space, even about things that have disappeared now. By experiencing effects, human knowledge searches for the causes he could not trace while experiencing. Experience can study the actions and reactions in human organs and behavior, looking for facts which he undoubtedly accepts, .without making contact with their identity directly

In brief, all phenomena in the world, even imaginations, hallucinations, will, pleasure

and sorrow, beauties, obligations and other observable issues can be experienced .and identified

Logical Understanding: includes understanding resulting from preliminaries based -٩ on logical principles. Logical certainty is sometimes conscious and sometimes not. Many deductions and reasoning are done hastily and not consciously. Even many scholars and intellectuals come to logical conclusions about phenomena and their interrelations without sufficient attention, knowledge of logical principles and rules, .but instead with much haste and uneducated omissions and selections

The highly significant point here is that the formal logical method does not allow man to make direct contact with facts because it concerns general concepts (secondary rational ideas) and logical symbols (including coded symbols and mathematical symbols in logical mathematics); thus, the abstract aspect of formal logic, in any form it may be, overcomes direct realism, and the certainty it causes does not include the .relaxed state brought about by direct contact with facts

On the other hand, changing concepts by means

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of jargon and transforming them into symbols may dry them up so much that they will resemble human fictional products rather than the facts themselves. Therefore, some philosophers do not consider professional logic as very worthy, especially since many discoveries, inventions and great works of art have been produced by minds that never fell into formal or professional logic. Edison never read any books on formal .logic to use it in his inventions

We must say that the most formal logic can do is accurately arrange the concepts and realities that have been actually observed, or potentially exist in human knowledge; it should never be given the duty of pulling the unknown from behind the curtain of .human senses or laboratories

Supreme Understanding: Correct usage of facts and realities by means of -١٠

complete mastery and dominance over them, in a way that facts are acquired like the levels and the identity of the human self are acquired intuitively. In supreme understanding, the refined form of realities and facts flow into man, which he absorbs .like his self and its powers and actions – intuitively

Deductive Knowledge: Deduction is known as achieving results without going - ۱۱ through the preliminaries. Some thinkers, however, have objected to this definition, believing that it is impossible to leap from one point to another without going through certain steps. Considering the level of compatibility between guessing and realities, :we can categorize deductive knowledge into three groups

a) Guesses that are compatible to all facts, in which the

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whole reality is suddenly acquired as it is. This kind of guessing is directly .proportionate with increase in knowledge and taste

b) Guesses that agree with realities to some extent, in which a fraction – not all – of .the facts are acquired

c) Guesses that are compatible with realities, albeit in another form. We may assume, for example, that the society may be able to resist tyrants without the leadership of a powerful political figure, but in fact it happens in the presence of such a leader. We had guessed correctly about the people's resistance against atrocities, but not about how it was going to happen. The identity of guessing and deduction is not limited to the speed at which the preliminaries are gone through; the subject to be guessed .about is also obscured from the mind

Knowledge by Assumption: Here, indirect premises or inadequate facts lead to - ۱۲ some form of acquisition of knowledge. It differs from guessing, because firstly, guessing moves so rapidly from the premises to the results that the preliminaries are .ignored, and secondly, the subject is hidden

In some people, assumptions are stable mental activities, but most assumptions are

scattered, temporary and unpredictable. Some judges, despite the legal information and evidence at their hand, have a special taste for legal judgment. Some politicians have a good sense of politics apart from all the political authority and expertise they may have. Some people have an instinct for art or business. However, none of them .say they make guesses

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Intellectualism: Here, we mean understanding facts without any illusions or mistaking them with superstitions or established traditions. Such knowledge is quite clear, like the clarity in seeing a physical phenomenon. On the other hand, there is decadence, .which means being rigidly fixed with precipitated knowledge acquired before

An intellectual – or "clear-minded" – person may therefore be considered as somebody who, having gained knowledge of the present and future, tries to make the ideals of his society embrace reality. The true intellectual is a person who has logically adjusted his relationship with vast facts during the course of time, and having achieved a correct understanding of causes and effect, and the changeable and unchangeable, feels himself responsible for making intelligible life become a reality in .his society, and will undergo any sacrifice he must make to achieve that

Intelligence: Confirming a theorem about which we know more than ۵۰ percent but -۱۴ less than ۱۰۰ percent has been called intelligence, idea, or opinion. Such conclusions and confirmations are frequently used in science, artistic analyses and complex affairs of daily life. "My idea is…" does not convey certain knowledge, but a knowledge .that calls for further study

Knowledge by Discovery: A quality consisting of a mixture of mental activity and -۱۵ reflections in an area free of the mind. The truth about this kind of knowledge is still unsolved; we can only identify the discoverer's state of mind prior and subsequent to .the discovery. We do not know how the discovery actually takes place

:There are a few points that can be observed about discovery

a) The researcher's endeavor along with his devotion and eagerness about the .concerned fact

.b) Gaining new knowledge about the concerned subject

c) Hope for achieving the facts. Some discoveries happen without a certain goal, like .X- rays which Roentgen discovered without having aimed for previously

d) The most mysterious thing about knowledge by discovery is a kind of mental freedom. When making a discovery, the mind is released from all chains, laws and .rules, and finds itself suddenly facing a true light

e) Evidence shows that when making a discovery, the mind uses an unknown factor, which cannot be intelligence, talent or great knowledge, for many people possess .them, but do not make any discoveries

f) Having made the discovery, the discoverer experiences huge freshness and joy. .Maybe it is because the discoverer sees some aspect of his discovery in himself, too

Illuminative Knowledge: In this kind of knowledge, "the facts and the truth shine -۱۶ on the human mind without needing any previous sensory preliminaries or formal thought." A form of mental enlightening occurs upon the facts. An example is when man realizes that the universe has meaning, and each component in it influences the general harmony and flow of the universe. Knowledge by illumination can happen in .everyone, but getting drowned in desires and wishes can prevent it

Intuitive Knowledge: The direct contact between man's inside and facts non- -۱۷ observable to his senses – naturally or intellectually – is called intuitive knowledge. It differs

from knowledge by illumination in the fact that intuition casts light on the subject itself, not the facts concerning or surrounding it. In intuitive knowledge, man uses his internal insight to see facts with a clarity far superior to his sensory sight or his .intelligence

Knowledge by Revelation: Revelations here are internal flashes. This kind of - ١٨ knowledge is similar to discovery, except knowledge by revelations has vaster domains, and can cover a great variety of realities. Discovery calls for a great deal of mental effort, but revelations can happen with a very meager background of .knowledge

Knowledge Based on Divine Revelations: In this form of knowledge, God reveals - ١٩ realities to a human being that deserves them. Holy Prophets of God had this attribute. Sometimes the prophet can directly receive the realities from God – through a certain power of recognition he has gained – and sometimes an angel is responsible for delivering the divine revelations to him. These are pure realities and truth, and convey what is useful for man's prosperity. Divine revelations are absolutely .undoubted and certain

Supreme Forms of Knowledge

Supreme forms of knowledge are not those supernatural activities of the mind that cannot be logically interpreted or justified; actually we mean the knowledge that man gains by means of purifying his inside of desires and wishes. In other words, man can achieve very high forms of knowledge having purified himself of selfishness. These :forms of knowledge can be categorized into four groups

,Knowledge: Here, we mean all-around, dominant knowledge of the facts -١

the kind of internal light that is caused by making contact with reality. If a thinker studies man from not a purely one-dimensional point of view, but from various aspects, achieving the internal light that is the result of establishing contact with the identity and aspects of man's existence, he will accomplish knowledge. Kinds of

science that serve selfish motives or self-benefit-seeking and are created by fatalistic .factors of our senses or mind cannot fit into this definition

:Supreme Amazement: We may categorize amazement into seven groups -۲

a) Initial, Superficial Amazement: Here, the human mind wants to discover and identify the things it encounters, but with the previous knowledge it has, it cannot do so, and thus falls into amazement. The more we know about new facts, the less this kind of amazement will be in us. Children do not experience this form when they find .something new, for they have no background knowledge about it

b) Amazement due to Ignorance: When man encounters a phenomenon that amazes him, two things may happen: a) man may know nothing about his amazement; he may not realize that he is amazed because of his own lack of knowledge. b) His mind .may recede, and ignorantly fight the amazement

c) Amazement Caused by Doubt: Some people are infatuated by their knowledge, and have absolute trust in what they know. Thus, if they face something unknown, the doubt and uncertainty they will encounter puts them into a very disturbing state of .amazement

:d) Amazement alongside the Known

There is some amazement alongside what man already knows about. It prevents him from becoming overconfident and arrogant about his knowledge, preserving his .modesty

e) Amazement far beyond Science and Thought: If the thinkers who are engaged in one or several fields of science or philosophical issues do not fall prey to mental arrogance and overconfidence and prevent themselves from being infatuated by their own knowledge, they will achieve a special kind of amazement, which can be of :two kinds

Negative, static amazement, where one feels at a mental stalemate, and the • progress comes to a total halt. Such people believe that all knowledge ends in .uncertainty and doubt

Dynamic, positive amazement, which is a powerful force in discovering what we are • amazed about. This form of amazement is a phenomenon full of feelings of greatness and attraction toward issues far beyond formal sciences, laws and principles. At this high state of knowledge, the contradictions and conflicts one observes in science and .knowledge are replaced by supreme forms of unity

:As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) says

گه چنین بنماید و گه ضدّ این جز که حیرانی نباشد کار دین

نه چنان حیران که پشتش سوی اوست بل چنین حیرت که محو و مست دوست

,Things change with time; indeed

.religion is merely creating amazement

.This amazement, however, is not absolute; it does not lead to a dead-end

.Rather, it makes man fascinated by God's love

f) Supreme, Ideal Amazement: This form of amazement

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is neither a sort of doubt or uncertainty, nor direct abstracts of sciences and experiences. Here, man feels the divine light of God's beauty and greatness radiate .into him

Thus, he achieves immense dominance over facts, drowns in the universe and enjoys peculiar pleasure and fascination. This is why the Holy Prophet of Islam asked God to increase his amazement. This form of amazement is far superior to all sciences and :knowledge. As the renowned Iranian poet Attar Neishabouri describes it

مرد حیران چون رسد این جایگاه در تحیر مانده و گم کرده راه

گم شود در راه حیرت محو و مات بی خبر از بود خود وز کاینات

هر که زد توحید بر جانش رقم جمله گم گردد، ازو او نیز هم

گر بدو گویند هستی یا نئی؟ سر بلند عالمی، پست کیی؟

در میانی یا برونی از میان؟ در کناری یا نهانی یا عیان؟

فانیی یا باقیی یا هر دویی هر دویی یا تو نئی یا نه تویی؟

گوید اصلاً می ندانم چیز من وین ندانم هم ندانم نیز من

هر که در دریای کل گم بوده شد دائماً گم بوده و آسوده شد

(When man feels the light of God, he can

even go far beyond that, and reach the truth about God, and if he is asked, 'Do you exist or not? You are a highly developed being, why do you degrade yourself so much? Are you mortal or immortal? Or both? Are you both of them, or are you you, or are you nothing at all?' He will reply, 'I don't know who I am, for anyone who drowns in the ocean of the whole, is lost forever, and thus has reached eternal tranquility.)

۳ - Mystical Knowledge: In this form of knowledge, man accomplishes an understanding of the universe with all of its components and interrelations that is truly crystal clear; he sees each component as a symbol of God's greatness.

۴- Wisdom: Wisdom conveys knowledge of the components of the universe and their interrelations as a harmonious whole, which depends upon the Creator of the universe. Man acquires this form of knowledge by means of moving on the path of evolutional development. When he achieves it, he will see all human beings moving toward God, and anyone who deviates from this path has in fact fallen astray from the way to perfection and greatness.

The Various Forms of Practical Relationship between the Mind and the Phenomenon to be discovered

These forms of knowledge involve the activities of the mind itself, not pure contact with the outside, which includes reflection. Having made contact with facts, the mind does certain operations on them, which we will take into consideration here. There :are three differences between mental activities and reflective activities in the mind

a) The non-reflective activities of the mind

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.are generally conscious

.b) Science has not yet found the internal factor that causes non-reflective activities

c) When non-reflective activities take place consciously, definite aim becomes .necessary

The Activities of the Mind

Confirmation: In this mental activity, imaginations and speculations are related and -۱ associated. An example is the theorem of the spherical shape of the sun. Several units face us: a) the sun, b) spherical shape, c) the relationship between the sun and spherical shape, which is the claim or deduction that makes the contact between the :subjects. We see two mental actions here

- .First, there is no external relationship between the sun and being spherical
- .Second, the claim or deduction we make about them is mental

Confirmation with Abstract Units: This kind of confirmation consists of abstract -۲ concepts, like mathematical theorems which involve numbers and symbols; they are .not symbols of real cases in the real world

Abstraction: Abstraction includes the omission of the characteristics of an identity, -۳ like a whole circle, or man as a whole. When we say that man is a talking animal, every

word in our theorem is an abstracted concept, caused by omitting observable .characteristics and qualities

Recall (Reminding): Recall means searching the contents of the human memory or -۴ the subconscious in order to remember things that have been kept there in the past. :This incredible mental activity has several elements

.a) The elements stored in the memory or the subconscious

.b) The motive to find and remember the concerned elements

.c) The mental factor that finds the stored elements

It seems

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that there is no relationship between the strength or weakness of recall and the little amount of contents in the memory or subconscious. Observations and experiences show that any unit considered as crucially important or put inside man by stronger .influences also has stronger retention and recall

Analysis: This kind of mental activity consists of analyzing a series into its - ۵ .components and units, and then studying them

Combination: Here, the mind collects the components and discovers how they are -۶ interrelated in the whole series. Some philosophers, like Russell, consider the analytical method as extremely important, and name their method "logical atomism." Both the analytical method and the combination method should be taken into .attention, as both are necessary to recognition and knowledge

Understanding the Relationship between Mental Activities and the Subject: - ۷ Occasionally, mental activities take place without complete awareness, but since mental activities are objective, sometimes man can become completely aware of them, and they can happen consciously. Such awareness allows the mind to adjust .the relationship between the mental activity and the subject

Careful Thought: This term conveys careful thought and prediction about the - ۸ eventual and ultimate consequences, which is essential to those who wish to achieve ideal amazement; a balanced relationship between the past, present and future is necessary in order to move toward perfection. There are a few conditions that must :be provided to accomplish correct states of careful thought

.a) curate identification of the laws and principles of life

.b) Studying the possibilities about events

c) Taking unpredictable, unexpected

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.events into consideration

Harmonizing: This mental activity involves logically organizing affairs and things - ۹ that help us reach our goals. Harmonizing the components, basic parts and the fundamental activities one must carry out are quite crucial for some goals; sometimes .it is so important that it can indicate the individual's genius or mental advantage

Logical Thought: There is a distance between the state man is in and the goal he -۱۰ must achieve. Without logical mental activity, filling that gap will not become possible. In other words, logical movement means starting out from the initial phase and going through the path to the goal. Man must also select and omit some of the items to do .so

Supreme Thought: The objective mental process that flows in the fundamentals of -۱۱ man's supreme relation with the universe, and the basic identity of the two, is called supreme thought. Here, the general basics and results of logical thought are formally put to use. With supreme thought, man's knowledge advances far beyond observable effects in order to reach the truth. For instance, man may see a small bird and realize things about the goal of the universe; observing the limited laws concerning a small part of the earth can help him understand the general laws dominating the universe – .in fact, realize how harmoniously orderly the universe is

Reasoning: This involves putting logical thought to work, together with awareness -۱۲ of thought units. Here, awareness and attention to the laws and principles of thought are necessary, whereas

in pure thought the mental activity may take place unconsciously, although thoughts start to work according to the laws and principles. Awareness and objectiveness are .quite crucial in reasoning

Supreme Reasoning: What we mean here is that there are other supernatural -۱۳ concepts far beyond the issues and laws concerning the superficial natural world. Formal logical reasoning is merely making a relationship between man and nature and other human beings; it does not deal with the good, evil or responsibility concerning it. Supreme reasoning, on the other hand, always takes justice, supreme responsibility and real unity among men into consideration, and is concerned with logical interpretation of the universe. Avicenna has discussed supreme reasoning in .the eighth and ninth part of his Esharat

Dominant Understanding: Here, it seems that a special kind of "smell" guides the -۱۴ mind toward understanding the relationship between the general facts and all the details. This penetrative understanding of all details can apply to various domains, like hadith, law and politics, where one can reach the level of jurisprudence. Those who have not achieve high levels of science and knowledge cannot reach dominant understanding. Some people, however, have a quite penetrative, analytic .understanding of life and the fixed and variable principles about it

Imagination: This form of mental activity makes the observable facts about the -۱۵ world undergo changes in the mind, and the identifier considers these changes to be the same as the real facts in the world outside, and accepts their characteristics

and effects. When imagining things, sometimes the mind makes up things that do not

exist, and sometimes it destroys things that exist. For instance, on a mountainside on a dark night, where no living thing is in sight, man may imagine seeing a wild lion, and run away as fast as he can. Imagination consists of several steps:

a) The first step includes the imaginer's mental background about the fact. If he has not ever seen a lion, for instance, he will never be able to imagine one.

b) External circumstances must be ready for the imagination to take place. For example, one cannot imagine seeing a lion in the middle of a crowded city, or inside his house.

c) The mental state of the imaginer, like the factors of fear or keen interest in the fact being imagined, is also important. These mental states sometimes show the weakness, and sometimes the power of the imaginer's character. Those imaginations that arise from man's weaknesses generally lead to harmful results, whereas imaginations based on his powerful character put positive mental activities to work. All works of art arise from the latter.

When imagining something, two conflicting phenomena take place simultaneously:

a) one is the imagination action, which considers what is not to be and what is not to be, and

b) the other is the knowledge that what has been imagined is in fact false and wrong. For example, when we watch an actor play the role of a hurt, oppressed man, we know that he is

only acting and is not really hurt, but still we may weep because we feel pity for the hurt, miserable person. Making a distinction between these two opposites – knowing that the actor is not really hurt, and feeling sympathy for him – is truly one of the most amazing and greatest functions of the human soul.

Various Relationships between the Mind and the Subject

The human mind can make contact with facts in different ways, which vary in their perfection or imperfection. As we know, knowledge has two aspects. First, the influence of external facts on the mind, which makes mental pictures. Second, the mental activities done on the reflected forms in our mind or in our imaginations. The human mind is influenced by external facts in different ways. For instance, the colors and the heaviness of an object leave different influences on our mind. Even various .colors influence us differently. Red and green have different effects on us

:The various ways of mental contact can be categorized as

Possibility: If we assume that a hundred percent contact with the subject means -۱ complete contact, less than fifty percent contact will mean possibility. If it reaches more than fifty percent, it is called doubt and uncertainty. The power to intrigue possibility also depends on the importance of the subject. In other words, the more .important the subject, the more powerful too the intrigue of possibility

Presumption: When our contact with the subject is more than fifty percent, our -۲ knowledge of it will be a presumption, and the higher it

.goes, the closer our knowledge will be to certainty

Certainty: Here, we have a hundred percent contact with the subject. Two factors -۳ :influence certainty

a) Discovering the truth by means of man's reality-seeking exploration, industrious struggle with doubt and uncertainty and eagerness to reveal the unknown. This is .called logical certainty

b) The induction of the facts into the human mind by means of omitting any causes or motives for doubt. The weaker the human mind, the more it can be influenced, and the stronger the character of the inducer, the faster and better his ability to influence .others

c) Sometimes, social circumstances provide the grounds for removing any doubt or uncertainty about a particular subject, in a way that even the common public can reach certainty about it without much careful thought. This kind of certainty is called .seasonal or mortal certainty

Quiescence: This is much like certainty, except that here man feels ready to decide -۴ .to act in accordance with the discovered realities

Knowledge: Various definitions have been presented for knowledge. Some have -۵ called it the reflection of facts in the mind. For a subject or theorem to be included in knowledge, omission, selection, secondary knowledge about facts reflected in the mind, imagination, making them dependent upon laws and principles, and also paying attention to the possibility of it breaking up due to newer discoveries, are all elements that should be taken into consideration when interpreting and justifying scientific .knowledge

:Three levels can be mentioned for knowledge to take place

:a) Initial Level

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At this level, the mind faces many certainties and doubts. Any phenomenon the human senses face shows a truth independent and separate of other phenomena. At the initial level, the certainties and doubts that enter the human mind are like influences that come and go, and any conflict or contradiction between them is .unimportant. In addition, man makes decisions based on his own knowledge

b) Intermediate Level: At this level, man faces different aspects of facts, and realizes any conflict his perceptions may have. This is where the human mind falls into doubt and uncertainty. However, in the case of those of weak character, these doubts hinder the discovery of the truth, whereas in those who have a strong character, increased curiosity is most advantageous. All in all, knowledge has to go through doubt and uncertainty at this intermediate level, which is quite crucial to man's

.knowledge

c) Supreme Level: The human mind is at the peak of knowledge at this level, and the .universe expands in his eyes, and man feels quite confident

General Knowledge: This kind of knowledge involves exploring an indefinite fact -۶ which is applicable to more than one individual, or can be considered as part of a whole. For instance, we may know that one person in the group of people we are facing is a teacher and the rest of them are students, but we are not sure which one is the teacher. The mathematics of probabilities involves inexact knowledge, which is also quite essential in discovering

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.the laws and principles of the universe

Detailed Knowledge: If a fact is identified with a hundred percent certainty in the -۷ human mind, its knowledge can be called precise knowledge, like knowing exactly .who the teacher is among the group of people in our previous example

Certainty: At this level, man (the one who becomes certain) seems to see the truth. -۸ This kind of knowledge is more effective than the three previous steps, for if the opposite of what man feels certain of is proved, it will deeply affect him mentally. :Certainty is divided into three steps

.Step One: Here, certainty is like a mirror, showing facts crystal clear

Step Two: The subject is explored in a way that all of man's mental levels are deeply .impressed by it

.Step Three: The subject man is certain of becomes a part of him

Gained Knowledge: A reflection of facts occurring in the mind is called gained -۹ .knowledge, like the reflection of facts in the mind

Intuitive Knowledge: Intuitive knowledge involves human knowledge of the -۱۰

human nature itself, along with its internal effects, like pleasure and pain, will and decision-making, thought, imagination, speculation and association of meanings. We :can thus classify intuitive knowledge into several levels

a) The known is an unknown nature. In other words, it is a nature that we know about in the observable world. This level of intuitive knowledge is merely a raw awareness. Undeveloped minds know nothing more about themselves than the collection

of organs that make up the human body. They think that the limbs, the eyes and the ".ears, etc, are the "self

b) In the next level, the "self" is considered as a truth that is in charge of human life in nature and its various interrelations. Man's behavior is based on correct goals, and he attempts to put all of his potentials and abilities to work in order to advance his .character by using all laws and principles of life

c) The "self" becomes independent of anything apart from the "self." In other words, at this level the "self" realizes its own independence. This is where the highest .possible level of intuitive knowledge occurs

:Passive Knowledge: This kind of knowledge has two meanings -۱۱

a) It can mean the reflection of facts in the mind, which is related to factors and .motives beyond the human nature

b) It can be any dependent kind of knowledge, even if it does arise from the human nature, for the knowledge that is caused by the human nature – albeit seeming independent and beyond being influenced by factors and motives – cannot be totally independent, for its nature is dependent upon God, who does not depend on anything at all. Those who have developed themselves along the path to discovery and knowledge realize this kind of dependence quite well, both in its initial steps and final .levels

۱۲ – Active Knowledge: This kind of knowledge is not dependent on any factor or motive, and although it can cast clarifying light

on everything we know, it does not depend on any of them. This kind of knowledge undergoes no change or development. It is only God who possesses such knowledge; just some levels of it can intuitively occur in man in the form of knowledge being present in the human mind.

The Relationship between the Mind and the Observable Facts in Discovery

The Relationship between the "Self" and "Other than the "Self" in Cognition

Recognition is based on two pillars:

۱– The "self," the innate pole, or the recognizer that discovers facts and realities.

۲– All apart from the "self," which are the observable facts of the universe; the target of discovery.

The human self has some tools for making contact with facts. The question here is whether these two pillars mutually influence each other or not – in fact, they do. To find out how, we must first study the factors affecting each pillar.

Pillar ۱: The "Self" and the Factors that Influence the Process of Gaining Knowledge

There are nine factors that must be taken into consideration about the first pillar:

۱– The "Self," the "Ego" or the "Personality:" The self is in charge of man's life, soul and cognition. Any disorder or disturbance that affects its various aspects can definitely influence its management of the cognitive factors. The human ego serves two purposes in the process of cognition:

a) Managing the factors of cognition and bringing them on the way to the adapted goals.

.b) Refining the cognition that infiltrates man through his means of gaining knowledge

The active elements of the self, which are like the refining factors of the self, influence the functions of the self and the knowledge it gains. Optimisms, pessimisms, reasoning, being influenced by emotions, haste, patience, tendencies toward

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knowledge or stupefaction, are all factors that can indeed influence the domain of the self, and color knowledge, particularly regarding theoretical and receptive facts in the .humanities

The Behavior of the Characters: The internal active element that determines how - ۲ one acts is called his character, his behavior, like artistic character, political character, legal character, etc. Sometimes man's character is so influential that it affects man's knowledge profoundly. If one has artistic character, for instance, "influences the basics, characteristics or results of the knowledge he gains with his artistic feelings. .By discovering one's behavior, we can guess what his viewpoint is regarding facts

Various Factors of the Brain: Factors like imagination, confirmation, memory, - ۳ thought, speculation, abstraction, allocations, the conscious and the subconscious, intuition, and revelations can play an active role in the human mind. They affect our knowledge and viewpoints. Any disorder in our conscious, subconscious or unconscious domains can influence our scientific outcome. If one of man's dearest relatives dies in a terrible incident, the grief of the incident will affect his mind when :making judgments about it. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) says

چون تو با پرّ هوا بر می پری لاجرم بر من گمان بد میبری

هر که را افعال دام و دد بود بر کریمانش گمان بد بود

چون تو جزو عالمی پس ای مهین کل آن را همچو خود دانی یقین

چون تو بر گردیّ و بر گردد سرت

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خانه را گردنده بیند منظرت

ور تو در کشتی روی بر یَم روان ساحل یم را همی بینی روان

گر تو باشی تنگدل از ملحمه تنگ بینی چو دنیا را همه

ور تو خوش باشی به کام دوستان این جهان بنمایدت چون بوستان

Since you see everything as serving to fulfill your whims and desires, you become) pessimistic about me. If one behaves like wild beasts, he/she will become suspicious about great human beings. Man, as generally a part of the whole universe, sees the universe similar to himself. If you turn your head, it will seem that the world is revolving, too. If you are in a ship, you may think the shore is moving away from you. If something distressing happens, the whole world will become miserable to you, and (.if you are happily spending time with your friends, it will be like a paradise

Natural Senses: One of man's channels for establishing contact with facts is his - ۴ senses. Man's natural senses comprehend objects and actions in a particular way. Man's eyes or ears cannot, for instance, see or hear all sounds or scenes. The natural senses can make contact with certain phenomena in accordance with their special .structure, and the slightest change in their structure will affect man's knowledge

The Secondary Effects of the Natural Senses: Illnesses and changes that occur in -۵

man's natural senses are some of the secondary effects of the natural senses. In .some diseases, for instance, man may see everything in a particular color

Sensory Activities that Affect the Conscious: Continual contact between the human -۶ senses and natural phenomena makes the mind unable to make direct contact with them. When man encounters a phenomenon like sunlight, for instance, he is affected in a way that his subsequent contact with sunlight will be influenced with it. As Farabi says, the human eye gets the light from the sun, and uses that light to see the .sunlight

He adds, “Each of our senses is affected by what it observes, and the influence is similar to the quality of the observed facts. If the effect is strong, it will remain for some time after the direct contact with the observed fact is over, like the human eye looking at the sunlight. If man stops looking at the sun, the effect will remain for a while. Also, if the ear hears a long, tiring sound, it will keep hearing it a while after the sound goes away, too.”

Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi has also pointed out man's manipulative role in his famous story about the elephant:

پیل اند ر خانه تاریک بود عرضه را آورده بودندش هنود

از برای دیدنش مردم بسی اندر آن ظلمت همی شد هر کسی

دیدنش با چشم چون ممکن نبود

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اندر آن تاریکیش کف میبسود

آن یکی را کف به خرطوم اوفتاد گفت همچون ناودانش نهاد

آن یکی را دست بر گوشش رسید آن براو چون بادبیزن شد پدید

آن یکی را کف چو بر پایش بود گفت شکل پیل دیدم چون عمود

آن یکی بر پشت او بنهاد دست گفت خود این پیل چون تختی بُدست

هم چنین هر یک به جزئیکاو رسید فهم آن می کرد هر آن می تنید

از نظر گه گفتشان شد مختلف آن یکی دالش لقب داد آن الف

در کف هر کس اگر شمعی بدی اختلاف از گفتشان بیرون شدی

(An elephant was brought into a dark room, and many people came to see it. But since the room was dark, the people touched, and each person came to a different point of view. One who had touched the elephant's trunk said the elephant is like a drainpipe.

Another, who had touched the ear, said it resembled a big fan. One man touched the elephant's leg, and claimed the elephant was like a pillar. Another touched the elephant's back, and said it was like a bed. Each person expressed the

knowledge he had gained based on what he had found; the ideas were quite diverse. (.Had they candles, however, their remarks would be united, and accurate

:Thus, men have diversities due to several factors

a) Limitations in their ways of contact with facts

b) The reflections in the mind – each man, having discovered one part of the .elephant's body, interpreted it merely based on that one part

c) Being content with the initial impression. If one man touched the trunk, for instance, he said it was like a drainpipe. Another, who had touched the elephant's ear, said it looked like a fan. In other words, each of them remained content with what they had .initially found

Tools Used for Expanding Knowledge: The tools and laboratories man uses in order -۷ to expand his knowledge definitely affect his ways of discovery. Each machine shows facts in accordance with its own particular structure; a telescope, for instance, is by no means comparable with man's senses in showing heavenly bodies, and any change in its structure will also influence our view of space. Each object has different characteristics. If the temperature of a room is ۲۷ degrees, for instance, each object in it, like the carpet, the windows, wooden objects or woolen clothes will have .different temperatures

As Max Planck says, “The physicist's ideal desire is to discover the real world outside. Despite all the tools of discovery he has, his measurements will never tell anything about the real world. Measures are merely somewhat

uncertain messages; as Helmholtz says, they are signals transmitted to the real world, from which man attempts to get conclusions, like a linguist trying to decipher .documents dating back to an ancient civilization

The linguist must accept the fact that the document has some meaning if he is to succeed. Likewise, the physicist must believe that the real world follows laws and principles that we cannot fathom; he may even have to abandon hopes of totally ".discovering them, or determine their identity with any certainty

Man's tools and devices of discovery lead to two forms of manipulation on man's behalf. If he looks at tiny particles through a microscope, for example, the particles are revealed to him having gone through two tunnels: the machine itself and man's .own senses

Man's Methods and Goals: How man tends to discover and identify things and his -۸ goal both influence his process of discovery. When man focuses all of his senses and thoughts upon a certain goal, his knowledge will be limited to that particular end. If a man heads for a mountain in search of firewood, he will not pay attention to anything else on his way, and if asked whether he saw anything else there, he will say "No." If one studies facts in order to achieve a certain goal, he will not understand the facts accurately. Basically, scientific fairness implies that if studies with a certain goal fail, the scientist should not claim that he studied but could not find anything; they had

.better say that he was not able to find what he needed with the tools he had

The Various Situations Facts Have: Farabi believes that since knowledge and the -۹ known are correlated, if the existence of the known is complete, the knowledge about it will also be complete. Likewise, if there are any contradictions about the known, its .knowledge will not be complete, either, such as movement, time, infinity and oblivion

The truth about movement is gradual exit from potentiality to activity, and each moment of it involves proof and defiance. The dependency of movement upon the

moving subject and its relationship with the cause brings about contradiction. If we could gain knowledge about any kind of motion from the moving subject and its .cause, our knowledge would be more complete

Not all of the above nine factors influence recognition at the same time. One or .several of them usually affect the knowledge we have of a subject

Pillar ۲: Other than the Self, or the Realities about the Universe

This pillar includes the identification of all creatures and phenomena that are to be recognized by the self. The self can, however, also be recognized by the selves of :other human beings. There are two important points here

The more the mental development the human ego makes, the less dependent it will -۱ .be on factors, tools and imaginations outside the human nature for its discoveries

Intuitive knowledge concerning the self does not mean that man is able to discover -۲ .every coordinate and characteristic the ego has

The “other than the self” pillar is of three

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:kinds

a) Realities being discovered for their own sake, which includes all of the creatures of .the world

.b) Tools and objects used for gaining science and knowledge

c) Objects that serve as a transit between the recognizer and the recognized, like the .light needed to see physical objects

A Criticism of Idealism

External facts cannot be denied. What some people like Berkley say – “External beings arise from human cognition and the facts that can be mentally conceived” – is

totally wrong. There are three reasons why facts exist independent of cognition about :them; reasons that prove idealism is incorrect

The Unity and Harmony between the Recognizer and the Recognized: Our eyes, as -۱ we know, see objects and shapes. When they see a table or a chair, they see its shape, and know that it is not a pencil, pen or anything else. If objects and facts did not exist outside our cognition, we could never have such understanding of different .facts

A fact cannot be in doubt between itself and other than itself. The reality is the -۲ specific object outside us, not an object uncertain about itself. For example, when we see an object in the distance and we are not sure whether it is a man or a stone, we still admit that the reality is only one of them – either man and not stone or stone and .not man. No idealist will admit that what he sees is the doubtful object

Man's Approaches to External -۳

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Facts: Cold weather, for instance, forces man to put on warm clothes. He escapes wild animals. If he sees a hole on his way, he steers away from it, or searches for light to identify things. Such approaches we have in regard to facts are the best reasons to .prove that they really exist

Responding to a Point of Criticism

As we have already mentioned, the "self " – the discoverer – cannot make contact with facts and realities without certain factors, means and passageways. The .question here is whether reaching pure, original knowledge is truly feasible or not

Among western physicists, Max Planck believes that we are able to discover a great many facts by means of our senses and the scientific tools we have, and although the discoveries we make are increasingly expanding, we will never reach the end of it. Presenting the two following principles, we will achieve an even more convincing :response

Principle One: Both the “self” and the “other than the self” – in other words, the recognizer and the external word – are orderly and disciplined. The expansion of objects due to heat is a natural law in the external world, as is the sensation of warmth felt by our senses which is caused by a series of various factors. The warmth our sense of touch feels on warm glass differs from what wool, wood or rocks feel in contact with something hot. There is no denying the discipline, order and harmony in the domains of the self and other than that; that's

.how physicists discover the laws governing nature

Principle Two: Harmony between the recognizer – the mind – and the facts in gaining knowledge; in other words, cognition behaves equally towards all facts. For instance, the human eye always sees large objects small from a distance, or the rotation of the blades of a fan always seem circular, not sometimes.

.This is how man has made a great many discoveries throughout history

Because of scientific knowledge, we must say that purely scientific approach to facts is one of the highly significant and crucial methods for revealing facts; however, it is not the only way. Having accepted this point, and provided that we do not deviate from the truth, powerful minds may attempt to find other ways to discover facts, and even achieve better results. Doesn't the fact that spiritual witnessing of facts can lead to the discovery of thousands of secrets in knowledge prove that there must be ways ?to discover facts apart from formal scientific methods

When discussing the relationship between the self (the recognizer) and facts we must keep in mind that if the subject of study is man and his various aspects, the self (the recognizer) and its cognitive tools and methods will be more influential. For example, when man thinks about will, he takes into consideration the will in him and what he knows about it, and even lets other humans know about it. Or if hedonism is the dominant element in the mind of an intellectual, he will use it

.to interpret the characters of other men, too

This is why we say that when Machiavelli describes man and his moral, political and social virtues, he definitely does so based on his own beliefs and thoughts. Machiavelli cannot understand the character of a fair, just person who follows his logical responsibilities; Machiavellian accounts of such a man's character would be purely .based on selfishness

From Science to Philosophy: A Look Inside

point

As we know, science has two meanings. In one sense, it conveys absolute awareness. In logic, it is referred to as the picture an object makes in the mind. Its second meaning pertains to empirical sciences, which include studying the relationships among phenomena in order to discover a law. Understanding and science are quite distinct from each other; cognition is absolute perception, and there are two kinds of :understanding

a) Initial Understanding: includes the reflection of an observable phenomenon, like the face of a person or a tree, in the mind, or the perception of an unobservable fact, .like realizing justice and beauty

b) Continuous Understanding: involves the continuation of the reflection of initial understanding in the mind. This type of understanding was called imaginative .cognition by ancient philosophers

We cannot find a comprehensive definition for science on which all scholars and intellectuals would agree. Some of them have considered science as the reflection of facts in the human mind. They do not consider mental activities to have a significant role in the development of science, for if a topic is to fall into scientific domains, ,omission, selection

secondary knowledge of the realities reflected in the mind, imagining them, their dependence on laws and rules, and also the possibility of their breaking away from the old laws and rules owing to new discoveries, are other elements necessary for .knowledge

The Definition of Science

Science involves discovering the fact whose general occurrence is independent upon the self and cognitive tools of man's existence and establishing a relationship with it. .Any theorem depicting such a discovery can be called a scientific theorem

Any scientific theorem based on facts consists of components that may disrupt the whole theorem by their least change. For example, changes in the relationship of the observer and the facts, i.e. any shift in his line of sight or distance from the object, will .alter the entire scientific theorem

Thus, science is the recognition of phenomena accompanied by the complete domination of man's soul over them – therefore, not all forms of imagination or perception can be called recognition; the domination of the soul over the issue is essential. Science is one of the human self's discovery activities, not merely a .reflection and subsequent perception

The Levels of Science

:Regardless of pre-determined principles, science can be classified into two degrees

The beginning level of science includes the pure reflection of a subject into the mind -۱ by means of our senses and other devices. At this level, our mind is like a mirror _ except for issues without observable effects, like causality, which is far different from ".seeing something in the mirror. This level is called "pre-science

In the next -۲

level, the subject reflected in the mind falls into the streams of side information,

concentration and universal laws, and principles. We now have a clearer knowledge of the subject, for it is no longer a mere reflection. In this step, the mind learns a lot about a phenomenon, and begins to discover how it relates to other phenomena. For example, when observing a leaf, the mental awareness of the observer does not only make him study the physical aspects of the leaf; he will go beyond that and study its .other aspects, considering it as a link of the chain of the universe

Considering science according to the state of mind the scientist may be in, science will :have three steps

a) Elementary: in this step, the mind encounters a great deal of certainties. Any .phenomenon man realizes is considered as a separate fact

a) Intermediate: the mind encounters various aspects of phenomena, and figures them out, provided there is no conflict between them; thus, the mind passes doubt .and enters the higher stage

b) Advanced: the mind is at the peak of its awareness here, and reaches complete .certainty by means of total knowledge of all phenomena

Factors that Make Man Seek Science

The basic factor that arouses the interest for science in man is the necessity for a correct, clear relationship with the facts that surround the human character. Such a ".necessity arises from the "self-love," or the "need for self-preservation

If the need for science persists, the necessity to establish a correct, clear relationship with facts can appear in

various ways. In other words, people recognize facts by means of different factors, :namely

Expanding the dominance of the "self" upon nature in order to make use of its - ۱ ,physical and spiritual benefits

۲- The enjoyment of science,

۳- Eagerness for discovering facts,

۴- Literal advantage-seeking, whether the greed for wealth, fame or popularity.

۵- Spiritual flourish and elevation through establishing contact with the truth.

Each of the above-mentioned factors is rooted in self-preservation and the perfection of the soul, and has advanced science throughout history. The third and fifth factors were more dominant in the past, but nowadays the factors which mostly aid man to govern nature are considered more significant.

Endeavors toward the flourishing of the soul are considered by some philosophers as the highest aim of philosophy.

Islamic philosophers also believe the primary purpose of seeking science to be perfecting the soul and flourishing the spirit.

Scientific Laws

What makes a law scientific? What criteria make scientific laws? Various answers have been posed, each of which cast light on one aspect of the question. For instance, when a thinker says, "A scientific law is a theorem that is repeated in the observable, physical world," his statement does not conflict much with another thinker's statement,

"A scientific law is a theorem applicable and compatible to numerous cases, and is general enough to apply to more than one person or one case." Thus, both thinkers state that if a phenomenon cannot apply to more than one case, it cannot be a scientific law. So, all thinkers agree that partial, specific

cases and facts which only arise at times, never qualify as a scientific law, even if they still may be worth studying from a scientific point of view.

Likewise, when a thinker says, “Every scientific law proves that any phenomenon arising in the physical, observable world depends on the existence of certain circumstances and the absence of inhibiting factors which, if distorted, the phenomenon will fall apart,” describes the same aspect about scientific laws as this statement, “If there were no order and harmony in the universe, there would be no laws in human knowledge, either.” Such theories not only do not conflict as definitions of scientific laws, but even verify one another, studying the same truth from various – .and very useful –points of view

Generally speaking, a scientific law is a general theorem showing a harmonious process in the universe, the occurrence of which calls for certain conditions and circumstances; if any of the required conditions are not fulfilled, the process cannot take place. The continuation of the needed circumstances make the process last, and .the continuation the conditions provide is what gives the scientific law its generality

When taking a scientific law into consideration, the following four aspects should be :studied about it

The Reality of a Scientific Law is the harmony existing in nature, protected by God. -۱ If we do not believe in God, we will have no logical way to account for the harmony .and order in nature, the continuation of which is the origin of scientific laws

As

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:we know, there are several theories on the laws of nature

,a) Laws are innate

b) Laws are not innate, or the instructional the theory about laws

,c) The theory of observable, orderly symmetries

.d) Laws are conventional

In the first theory, the scientific law discovers the innate why others are related to other phenomena. In other words, it is unsolved how the original law is to be interpreted. The other problem with this theory is that the internal relationships and characteristics of an action are considered absolutely relative. Characteristics that are .innate and internal to one process may be external in another

The instructional theory, which we approve of, states that there is no extended rope to pull phenomena after each other, and prove that Phenomenon A must definitely be followed by Phenomenon B. We have failed to directly observe the essential relationships that form the laws of nature even with the most accurate tools. We know that the essential relationships that make up the laws of nature are not mental, and that the laws of nature show each scientist various constants that science is based on. Will there be a day when we can observe these constants? Thus, the best of these theories on the nature of the laws of nature is the instructional one, for it .accounts for the more important hows and whys

According to the instructional theory, the universe and everything in it are constantly changing, for God's blessing flows into it from the world of supernatural. Jalal-addin (Muhammad Molawi (Rumi

:has supported the instructional theory in these verses of his poetry

قرنها بگذشت و این قرن نُویست ماه آن ماه است و آب آن آب نیست

عدل آن عدل است و فضل آن فضل هم لیک مستبدل شد این قرن و امم

قرن ها بر قرنها رفت ای همام وین معانی بر قرار و بر دوام

شد مبدّل آب این جو چند بار عکس ماه و عکس اختر برقرار

پس بنایش نیست بر آب روان بلکه بر اقطار اوج آسمان

Many centuries and eras have gone by, but the reflection of the moon shining on the) stream of times is still coming from the same moon. Justice, for instance, is still as it

was; greatness has remained unchanged. It is only the centuries and the people who have changed. O Noble One! Centuries have gone by, but truly original human concepts and virtues are still standing firm. The water in the stream of the universe keeps changing by the moment – not even two moments are the same – but the picture reflected upon the water from the moon and the stars (the truth) is firm and steady. Thus, the basis of the reflection of the moon and the stars cannot be on the (.water; it must be connected to higher things

In fact, Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi

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Rumi) is pointing out that time passes us by, relationships change and peoples and) social trends evolve, some disappear forever, but the basic concepts and truth about .man and the universe prevail firmly

The instructional theory believes that the creatures of the universe do not innately possess the ability to continue their existence, but receive it from a higher, greater world. In other words, the fact that A must have the Characteristic B, or B must be the result of A is not their innate quality, but divine blessing. Let us quote from Albert ".Einstein: "I consider God the protector of laws

:And also from Max Plank

A physicist's ideal is to externally discover the truth; yet, his sole tool – his devices of" measurement – never tells him anything about the real world. Measures are merely doubtful messages to him. As Helmholtz believes, they are signals the real world sends him, and he tries to make a conclusion from them, just like a linguist attempting to read a document found from a lost civilization. In order to achieve any results, the linguist must accept the fact that the document has some meaning. Likewise, the physicist has to base his work on the rule that the universe follows laws we cannot ".comprehend

Bertrand Russell believes that by imagining that the realities about the universe come

.from another eternal world, we will have a pleasant picture of our world

How Scientific Laws Are Discovered: the first factor in discovering scientific laws is -۲ the concrete belief

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and intelligent understanding of the fact that no phenomenon in the world is without a law. If a scientist tends to discover the laws of nature, he must basically have faith in the harmony in the universe. As Einstein writes:

For even the slightest rays of intelligence and logic to be able to shine on the world, " deep faith that the universe is harmonious is essential. A burning desire to understand ".is necessary. Men like Newton and Kepler undoubtedly had such faith and desire

Ever since man became capable of relating to other creatures from a scientific point .of view, his primary motive for discovering the laws of the universe arose

:The steps the mind must go through in order to discover a scientific law are

.a) The communication between his senses and tools with the subject

b) Experiencing and completing the observation by means of the senses and technical tools. In this step, trial and error observations are carried out until the scientific law is .established

c) In the third step, the mind proceeds to consider the puzzling points, and deletes .those that do not comply with the law studied

d) The last step includes a general theorem in the mind of the researcher forming a .law, abstracting itself from observable cases in the world

The generality of the scientific law, and its origin: A theorem cannot become a -۳ scientific law unless it applies to a great many cases. The generality of a law originates from the continual order dominating nature, which brings about effects

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:and similar results. The two factors that influence the generality of scientific law are

a) The generality of the characteristics found in all creatures, like the law of self-preservation. The generality of the characteristics among creatures is a result of the experiencing and generalizing all cases concerning the subject. For example, in order to study reproduction in living creatures, all animals must be studied. Direct observation of every case is, however, quite difficult, but observing a large number of .them can lead to a generality, and turn the hypothesis into a scientific theorem

Experiencing each single case is neither possible nor necessary. By realizing the original identity and elements of a subject, a general theory about its cases can be presented. For instance, when we discover the identity of water by means of knowing its basic elements, we may consider it as a scientific theory, and present general principles on it. Nevertheless, the mere discovery of identity is not sufficient in order to discover all forms of a kind, and all characteristics must be taken into consideration. General knowledge about a certain animal, for example, cannot mean knowing about .all animals

b) Abstracting the facts about the universe and understanding how they are related; we call this abstract composition, which involves mental activity aiming to find the identity of facts not needing observation of all cases, like understanding numbers, geometric shapes and the principles concerning them. ۲ × ۲ = ۴, for instance, is a result of abstracting numbers and the relationships

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.among them

۴- The criteria for being scientifically valuable: any fact identifiable according to the following aspects can be considered as a scientific subject. In other words, the :characteristics a scientific subject should have are

,a) The possibility of determining its identity and characteristics

b) The possibility of studying the conditions which promote and /or inhibit its ,occurrence

,c) The feasibility of studying and logically calculating its effects and results

d) The feasibility of distinguishing cyclic phenomena (like the four seasons) from those ,phenomena that are related by means of a cause-and-effect relationship

,e) The phenomenon should be comparable to its similar and opposite cases

f) The principles and laws governing scientific laws (such as the impossibility of combining opposites in philosophy, two opposites neutralizing each other, and many .others) should apply to it

Thus, many natural phenomena like mines and trees, and also social, economic, political, and psychological topics, and even valued facts such as justice and duty can .be studied scientifically

Therefore, higher facts like dignity, virtue, duty, justice, etc, can be investigated scientifically in the same manner as physical phenomena can. Justice, for example, :can be studied scientifically if these six characteristics are taken into consideration

Justice is a topic that has a definite identity and can be defined. The identity of -۱ justice is "behaving in compliance with law," or in fact the innate quality that prevents .man from breaking the law

Justice follows the cause-and-effect law. It cannot occur in man's life without a -۲ .cause. Justice cannot deviate from the cause-and-effect law

Justice keeps man -۳

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away from committing evil deeds and falling into psychological disorders, and can also make his free will flourish. It is impossible to imagine man without this quality, which .motivates him toward the good and dutifulness

It is not possible to have justice without its effects and results. Justice certainly -۴ brings about outcomes, which must be identifiable, for justice itself is identifiable, too. For example, scientific research can show that just people are well-balanced, .confident, and enjoy a good reputation in their society

As other scientific topics, justice is also comparable with similar cases. Justice can -۵ .be compared with other human virtues

Certain conditions and circumstances are required before justice can embrace -۶ reality. Not everything can provide those conditions, which is also the case for any .physical phenomenon to occur, too

The Definitions of Philosophy

Ever since thought and intellect arose, many definitions for philosophy were presented throughout the East and the West. Having studied them, we will discuss :three groups of them

Philosophy means, Efforts towards knowing the causes, effects, and the analytical -۱ and combination flows in a problem. Once a question is posed about a problem, the .first step toward its philosophical analysis has been taken

:Philosophy is the mental activity in these five domains -۲

a) The fundamental principles of knowledge: Is there any reality if we ignore the ego? ?Can realities really be known? If they can, how and how much

b) Issues prior to the formation of scientific theorems, such as the objects in the observable world can be separated up to a point

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where further separation is impossible. This philosophical perception had been accepted before science had discovered the facts about atoms and molecules. Is the order in the universe in its particles – where laws are abstracted – or is it non-innate ?and non-innate, and laws are conventional

c) The problems that arise after making contact between scientific laws and facts. For instance, when science discusses the various kinds of movement in nature, the .movement of creatures can be used as the basis of a series of philosophical problems

d) Problems that arise simultaneous with the arising or continuing of scientific theorems, such as the mortality or immortality of matter, time, space, and the basics about values and virtues. In any period, with our scientific knowledge reaching a .certain level, such theorems and concepts come into the eye of human thought, too

e) Other issues that fall into philosophical discussions concern the characteristics of the "self," and its supernatural activities, like the survival of the "ego" throughout man's life, the constant qualities of the human self or the abstraction of generalities .and numbers and concepts that balanced, sound minds are capable of

۳ - The knowledge caused by "scientific understanding, guesses, innovations, inspirations and observations," is called philosophy. For example, science shows the order in nature, and the perceptions we get from guessing prove that natural flows are not baseless; both of them show that the universe must have a meaning and a highly significant rhythm. Some people realize the glory and elegance of nature by means

.of evidence and observation, which is also a form of philosophical perception

The Principles of Philosophical Systems

:Philosophical systems are based on two kinds of principles

۱- :Established principles that prove philosophical systems, and are two kinds

a) Principles that have established themselves in Eastern and Western philosophical schools throughout the history of human thought, such as Aristotelian philosophy eras .ago, medieval abstraction principles, and positivist philosophies nowadays

b) Established principles that are dynamic and unlimited, like the principle of the

necessity of discovering and knowing realities, perfection-seeking and greatness-seeking by man, which is one of significance in philosophy.

۲ - The principles and mental activity of the intellectuals based on pure reasoning, abstraction and principles of imagination. Sometimes an intellectual's perceptions so strongly dominate his spiritual states that they can even fatalistically justify his thoughts, and consider them as absolute. For instance, philosophers like Machiavelli and Hobbes believed that the human nature is pure evil with such certainty and realism that they could not imagine anything else to be true.

The intellectual is deceived by the fatalistic justification of the domination of his hidden spiritual levels. Some intellectuals like Machiavelli and Hobbes believe so firmly that the human nature is pure evil that it had occupied all of their mental states, becoming their internal, active element; they were so firm in their claim that it seems they had created man themselves.

We should not think that all intellectuals produce their thoughts regardless of all absolutes or imaginations. Sometimes the intellectual becomes so passionately prejudiced about an issue that it controls his

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spirit deeply, making him ignore some realities.

The Criterion for a Subject Being Scientific or Philosophical

It is the researcher or the observer's approach that determines whether a subject is scientific or philosophical. How observers see the relationship between the realities and facts in the universe can influence the research – in fact, this relationship can define the individual's investigation as being scientific, philosophical, or imaginary.

The scientific or philosophical nature depends, in other words, on how the observer relates to the reality. If he pays attention to the superficial aspects of the subject, his knowledge will be scientific; if he focuses on the principles and fundamentals of knowledge concerning the subject, his knowledge will be philosophical. There are four

:principles about this

The realities and facts in the universe are interrelated. In order to scientifically - ۱ study a subject, it must be studied clearly determined from various aspects and points of view. Thus, any scientific theorem involves a reflection of the selection and determination of a subject (realities current in the external world) and serious efforts .to explore aspect or aspects of the focused current reality

The universe is very vast, and man's mental and spiritual activities are greatly - ۲ varied; thus, the contents of scientific theorems should never be regarded as absolute and continual explorations and research is always needed. As Jalal-addin ,Muhammad Molawi says

تازه میگیر و کهن را میسپار که هر امسالت فزون است از سه پار

چیست نشانیّ آنک، هست جهانی

دگر نو شدن حال ها رفتن این کهنه هاست

روز نو و شام نو، دام نو و باغ نو هر نفس اندیشه نو، نو خوشی و نو عناست

عالم چون آب جوست بسته نماید، ولیک میرود و میرسد نونو، این از کجاست

نو زکجا می رسد؟ کهنه کجا میرود؟ گرنه ورای نظر عالم بی منتهاست

Don't let yourself get stuck in the past and the old; remember that your current year) is worth more than your last three years altogether. What does all that exists indicate? Another world. The newness of the present is the fading away of the old. New days, new nights, new problems, new gardens; each breath signals a new idea in new clothes. Though the universe may seem limited like a stream, but it continually flows on; where does it originate from? Where does all the new come from? Where (.does all the old go off to? Indeed, beyond what we see lies an endless world

From any scientific theorem, many analytical and combination theorems can be - ۳

derived. In other words, when a reality is determined as a scientific theorem for an observer, it can become the starting point for his progress to analyze and combine .things and make a great deal of scientific theorems

No clear issue exists without there being theoretical theorems -۴

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around it, and vice versa. Thus, no theoretical issue is without an apparent theorem, either. The farther you get from the issue you are scientifically studying, the slower .your progress will be after some time, for the path will get darker and darker

A Scholar's Philosophical Rise

Provided that the developed thinker is not confined to pre-established mental and spiritual principles, he can discover delicate scientific theorems by means of his effort, accuracy and passion, and descend to exploring the highest secrets of the universe. Such advance can happen in both purely natural sciences and also the humanities. For instance, Niels Bohr, the renowned physicist, had to consult the philosophy of the :ancient Chinese intellectual, Laozi, and use one of his philosophical principles

".In the great theatre of existence, we are both actors and spectators"

Another scientist who explored many of the amazing secrets of the universe and the :relationship between nature and the supernatural was Max Planck. He said

Tending to believe that powerful, mysterious factors are at work in this world is one" ".of the most significant characteristics of our times

The fact that while researching on the phenomena and processes of nature we try to" omit all 'ifs' and 'maybes' and reach what is essentially necessary, shows that our endeavors are continually dependent upon something vital far beyond the relative – something absolute, eternal. That is what we want to reach. I believe that this is not a ".quality only of physics, but all sciences

Hence, we see how purely scientific theorems can provide the grounds to

.rise to the highest of philosophical and supernatural issues

Researchers and scientists who possess deep insight and sharp observation, like Albert Einstein and Max Planck, are able to see higher aspects of the universe – things unintelligible to those who devote themselves to nature. Nature scientists of pure mind and accurate actions can use their knowledge of this world to reach "evidence about the perfect absolute," achieving a certain originality and brilliance. Thus, these mountains, jungles and fields – though seeming to be obeying purely natural laws – can be seen as meaningful parts of a meaningful whole that possesses a great .rhythm having made the ascend

The Essence of Supernatural Knowledge

:Supernatural knowledge is of crucial importance to man. The reasons for this are

a) Man's curiosity makes him not confine his study of the facts about the world to the apparent relationships; he attempts to get into the depth of the fact, and explore all .their aspects

b) Experimental sciences are not capable of answering all of man's fundamental questions. The human mind tends to move from the details up to the generalities, and explore the principles and foundations of the facts about the world. Science cannot do .him much help here

c) If man's intense need to discover the fundamentals of the world is to be fulfilled, and the anxiety created by the incapability of man in solving the basic problems on .knowledge is to be quenched, highly supernatural concepts and issues are necessary

We must keep in mind that the supernatural knowledge we believe necessary is one

that pays considerable attention to not only intelligence and wisdom, but also the purification of the human will; it prevents man from abusing his relationship with

himself and the truth. Supernatural knowledge defines the range, level and harmony of natural sciences. Supernatural knowledge is not limited to the knowledge of the facts about the world; it should discover what is useful to man's development and emancipation. When supernatural knowledge does not ignore the realities about :human life, it will lead to these advantages

Achieving such knowledge, man will regard the other sciences he has as part of his -١ ;supernatural knowledge

It presents man with the principles and fundamentals of knowledge and discovery, -٢ .enabling him to find his ultimate aims

Natural sciences identify the components of nature for us, but they say nothing -٣ about the highest of its principles and the purpose of its creation; supernatural knowledge, however, reveals not only the ultimate principles and ends, but also provides man with the most elevated of feelings and emotions. It shows him the highest aim of life. Despite all the recent scientific advance, attention to the .philosophy of life has unfortunately not only not increased, but rather diminished

If man defies supernatural knowledge, his knowledge will be limited to phenomena -۴ and their inter-relations. He would ignore the discovery of the real truth of what they .all depend on

Supernatural knowledge is higher than all forms of human knowledge, not at their -۵ service, for it is not confined to the discovery of short-lived

events and mortal phenomena. “Supernatural knowledge, the pinnacle of which is the knowledge of God, cannot be regarded as a device.” It is far too high to be that. Without paying attention to knowledge about God, man cannot make any spiritual .advance

Ever since late ١٧th century, the West has ignored the supernatural. The viewpoints :that have led to this ignorance are

a) Auguste Comte – who divided the history of mankind into divine, philosophical and scientific periods – and some others believe that we are living in the era of science, not philosophy, so there is no need for talk about the supernatural. We must say that if philosophical issues were unnecessary, there would not be so much discussion about the highest of philosophical matters between philosophers during the last few centuries. Comte has categorized history based on human cognition.

For instance, he believes that during the divine period, when man was unable to understand the reasons underlying natural phenomena, he assumed that they had supernatural reasons, but now that man has discovered how they happen, he does not need supernatural elaboration for physical phenomena. Yet, understanding philosophical issues requires a great deal of mental effort, and man has to be at the peak of his mental development – which Comte believes is our era – to understand them. Furthermore, if we accept Comte's categorization, we cannot logically interpret the philosophical schools of thought before Jesus Christ was born, or even the medieval ones.

b) Another reason why the supernatural has been

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ignored is that man feels he has no need for advanced philosophical issues now that science has made immense progress; since he has been able to make contact with phenomena by means of scientific developments for a few centuries, he thinks there is no room for philosophical discussions any more. Those who support this belief have forgotten that experimental sciences are too limited to be able to answer certain philosophical questions.

For example, the human mind is interested in moving from the specific to the general and vice versa, which is beyond what science can do for him.

c) Combining scientific methods with philosophical ones by philosophers of the past also led to the neglect toward the supernatural. In the past, scientific and philosophical problems were intertwined, and philosophers did not necessarily use

scientific methods to solve scientific problems, so some people have come to think that only scientific methods are to be used for studying phenomena, and philosophy should be put aside totally. They ignore the important fact that separating science from philosophy and all their issues and problems does not omit one of them in favor .of the other. Philosophy deals with things that science can never consider

The supernatural should be protected from superficial approach. Philosophy is not a science easily presentable to people. However simplified advanced philosophical issues may become, they will only torture the average mind, for they are far above it .to be fathomed

These days, some intellectuals have fallen into superficial approach, and try to present

the highest of philosophical concepts in a way the public can enjoy. Although presenting thoughts in a simple way is important, it should not fall into superficiality, where even supernatural issues can be made understandable to the public. Having studied some philosophical books and terms briefly, some people think they can easily .understand them, so they begin giving opinions and remarks about it

?The Analytical Method or the Combination Method

One of the issues in scientific and philosophical discussions and debates is which method is more suitable: analytical or combination. Some philosophers defend the analytical method, believing that a phenomenon must be analyzed into its components up to a point where further separation is not possible, and then it can be .studied and explored

Bertrand Russell, for instance, was one of the intellectuals who named his method “logical atomism.” He believes, “The only label I have ever given to method is 'logical atomism,' although I have always avoided being labeled with something. I believe that logical atomism means the only way of discovering the nature of objects is analysis as exhaustively as possible; the resulting components are 'logical atoms' – or

that's what I've named them – for they are not small physical particles, [but] ".components of ideas, outside the issues concerned with the structure of things

The problem with purely analytical knowledge and discovery is that it studies a phenomenon totally regardless of other phenomena. In other words, it does not see .each component as related to the other beings and phenomena it is surrounded by

The analytical method

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is of importance in discovering facts about the universe, but it is incapable of a full .discovery. The combination method can serve as its complementary

Extreme applications of the combination method makes man cast doubt upon the most obvious of realities, and be left with a scattered collection of knowledge. Nowadays some people think that the analytical and combination methods belong to scientific domains and the combination and generalist approaches suit philosophy. We must keep in mind that the scientific method is not solely analytical, nor is the philosophical method entirely combination. A harmony between the two methods is .what can provide man with accurate knowledge

The analytical method is suitable for studying sets where the components have no interactive relation with each other. In other words, the analytical method is best when if by discovering each component, accurate knowledge is achieved. But when the components interact with each other and their combination results in a new phenomenon, the analytical method does not suffice. Merely mentioning that water consists of oxygen and hydrogen, or that salt is a combination of sodium and chlorine is not enough – merely identifying hydrogen and oxygen tells us nothing about the .qualities and characteristics of water

Knowledge gained by the analytical method, therefore, ignores the combinatory .characteristics of the whole

The problem with the analytical method is that having separated the whole and

studying each component, the researcher considers each component as absolute. In ,other words

The most serious harm the analytical method can do to knowledge is that

by following this method, the thinker, having separated and analyzed the whole, a .component becomes the absolute reality of his study, affecting everything else

As an example, George Sarton believes that, "The history of science is one of the major parts of the spiritual history of human beings, and the other major parts are the history of art and religion." On the other hand, he has said that, "In order to account for man's progress, the history of science should be the basis of the explanation." In fact, he is following an analytical method; therefore, he is considering the history of .science, a mere part of the history of human evolution, as the absolutely basic part

The Differences between Science and Philosophy

:Some of the differences between science and philosophy are

١ - As Whitehead believes, "Philosophy searches for generalizations that determine the entire reality of the truth, without which no reality could escape being abstract. Science, on the other hand, creates abstraction, content with knowing only some ".basic aspects of the entire truth, just a relative part of it

٢ - Science cannot provide us with absolute dominance over the universe; each scientist can discover only aspects of realities, whereas by means of philosophy one .can dominate the knowledge of the whole universe

٣ - Philosophical systems are more stable than scientific systems, for they are based upon principles and generalizations far beyond the interpretations that form science. Philosophy has many fixed principles, such as the existence of realities in the world 'outside the mind, movement in the universe, objects for objects

sake and objects for the self's sake, the reliance of variables on unchangeables, and .the uniformism of the mind

In philosophy, we can achieve a form of certainty mixed with some vagueness, but -۴ in science we cannot achieve any certainty because of the influence of factors like the .tools of knowledge

There are a great many subjects which science fails to discover, such as the final value of good and evil, or in general any phenomenon that has absolute value and cannot be measured like natural issues; issues like absolute reality, absolute ".nonexistence, etc are also among them

Philosophy is putting all its efforts into finally solving problems that have existed since the earliest times. In other words, philosophy still endeavors to discover the truth about philosophical matter, absolute values, the relationship between man and the universe, and the extent of the mind's judgment in realities. Another part of .philosophy tends to understand general principles including various scientific results

Despite the disputes scientists and philosophers have, they need each other. Contemporary philosophers believe that science can help them by proving the preliminaries to some philosophical proofs, and also by providing new problems for .philosophical analysis

The philosopher knows things that the scientist can neither deny nor study on by means of scientific methods. However, the sometimes the scientist becomes concerned with the possible necessity of gaining such philosophical knowledge and .their influence on scientific explanations or the foundations of those explanations

For example, when a physicist discusses movement in physics or when a chemist

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studies interactive movements in chemistry, each have a certain concept of movement in his mind; likewise the philosopher attempts to perceive a kind of movement that involves everything. When the physicist or chemist assume that the

meaning of movement according to the philosopher is vaster than what physics and chemistry (or experimental sciences, in general) offers, they may conclude that by taking the philosophical meaning of movement into consideration, they may both .discover new meanings and even develop their approaches

Science also explains various forms of physical matter with all their specific characteristics to us. The flow of human thought, however, does not stop at that; it attempts to discover the truth that can be the absolute matter in all external objects, and then come to a general relationship regarding movement. Thus, it is in such .philosophical problems where science seems to be at the service of philosophy

The philosopher knows quite well that science has discovered some of the realities and facts of the universe, and that scientific contact with facts – if accurate – is more reliable than the philosophical one, but purely scientific knowledge cannot bring us to the discovery of all components and levels of the universe. In other words, the mind may even playfully inhibit the progress of thoughts, so using science whenever possible is necessary. The philosopher should, however, keep in mind that his scientific contact with facts can only reveal to him some limited aspects of the facts, and he should never expect science to

.introduce him to all components and levels of the universe

The Classification of Philosophy

:Some philosophers have preferred a geographical classification

Eastern philosophy -١

Western philosophy -٢

They have then proceeded to point out a series of characteristics for each category, sometimes even making them conflict. Here are five points of difference between :Western and Eastern philosophy

a) Eastern philosophy focuses on supernatural realities, but Western philosophy is .more naturalistic, focusing on the physically observable

b) Eastern philosophy makes use of pure thought and reasoning when studying the facts and realities of the universe, whereas Western philosophy – particularly since .the Renaissance – uses the senses and other technological devices

c) In order to discover general principles accounting for the universe, Eastern philosophy takes into consideration the post-experimental principles, whereas .Western philosophy insists on using experimental methods

d) Unlike Eastern philosophy, Western philosophy tends to criticize and reconsider .general philosophical fundamentals and principles of the past

e) Western philosophy emphasizes that when discussing man and the universe, "what .there is" and "what there should be" be separated, but Eastern philosophy does not

Such an approach and distinction between Western and Eastern philosophies is not acceptable. The issues thinkers and intellectuals face depends on the conditions and circumstances they are surrounded with, so any intellectual or thinker may come up with the same issues and problems as his peers when facing the same conditions. If the conditions make him feel it absolutely crucial to discuss time and movement, for .example, any other intellectual or thinker would do the same feeling the necessity

The important point

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is the intellectual's mind becoming engaged with the problem – if this happens the intellectual will start his work on it, whether belonging to Western or Eastern philosophy. Industrial advances, changes in social relationships and the rise of a new meaning of Epicurean freedom led to new issues in the West, the study of which even infiltrated their philosophy and created special philosophical principles and basics. If such phenomena had arisen in the East, however, the same would definitely have .happened to Eastern philosophy, too

The points of criticism on the characteristics of thought systems in Western and :Eastern philosophies are

The claim that Eastern philosophy focuses on non-physical facts and Western - ۱ philosophy pays more attention to materialistic issues is not acceptable. Although Western philosophy did find some tendency toward naturalism thanks to Francis Bacon, many Western thinkers did not follow it. In the twentieth century, many Western thinkers focused on the supernatural, and their naturalistic tendencies never prevented this. Einstein, Planck, Bergson and Whitehead had a comprehensive .approach to the issues about man, both natural and supernatural

Stating that Eastern philosophy is based upon pure reasoning and intelligence and - ۲ Western philosophy is founded on experimental methods shows how ignorant one .can be toward the developments of thought systems in the West

If the West has paid more attention to naturalism – which certainly follows experimental methods – throughout the recent centuries, it is due to the needs of those countries; if the East also felt the need to study

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the qualities and characteristics of vegetables and plants and physical and chemical phenomena, they would have used such methods too, rather than the al-vahed theory, which states that only a single, unique thing can arise from the nature of a single, unique thing. In the early stages of the development of Islamic culture, when Muslims paid a lot of attention to naturalism, experimental methods were put to .frequent use

Scientists like Zachariah Razi, Avicenna and Hassan ibn Heissam used laboratory devices in fields such as chemistry, physics and medicine. Neither Islamic thinkers nor Western intellectuals, however, were ignorant toward the basic principles of philosophy, and the necessity of abstraction and mental generalization, for without them they could never have abstract natural laws from the order and harmony .dominant over the universe

Another point of criticism is the statement that Western philosophy shows little - ۳ emphasis on general concepts and fundamentals, whereas Eastern philosophy searches for general laws that interpret the universe. Positivism – which aimed to categorize sciences and give philosophy a positivist aspect – failed in the West, and was criticized by many Western philosophers, who turned to non-experimental methods. No intellectual can defy a series of mental fundamentals and still believe in .observable facts that cannot be analyzed without those fundamentals

The claim that there is no criticism or reconsideration in Eastern philosophy, - ۴ whereas Western philosophy criticizes and reconsiders the fundamental philosophies of the past quite often is not correct. All books on Eastern philosophy include a criticism of

the thoughts and ideas presented before. Islamic thinkers and intellectuals have .never been mere followers of their predecessors' thoughts

For instance, though Farabi and Avicenna have accepted some of the philosophical ideas of Aristotle and Plato, they never completely followed them. In his book Asfar, Mollasadra has discussed and criticized many of the philosophical thoughts before him, and presented new ideas, too. If Eastern philosophy were truly obedient of prior thoughts, there would be no valuable works like Qazali's Tahafat-ul-phalasefe or Ibn .Rushd's Tahafat-ul-tahafat

We must remember, however, that philosophers have also sometimes turned to indirect criticism; in other words, they have criticized the thoughts of others alongside presenting their own ideas. Some of them have even interpreted the thoughts of other philosophers, for sometimes a thinker cannot properly word his own thoughts, but another intellectual may be able to correctly interpret them in a better way. This has been an important step toward eliminating the disputes between philosophers. Furthermore, respecting others' views is a highly significant principle in scientific and philosophical research; even in the West, there are both inconsiderate figures like Bertrand Russell and also quite morally well-adjusted ones like Whitehead and

.Planck

It also incorrect to say that in Western philosophy there is much attention to – ۵ making a distinction between “what there is” and “what there should be” when discussing mankind and the universe, whereas Eastern philosophy shows little .emphasis on it

First, we cannot make

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any separation between what exists and what there should exist concerning man, for ”.human life is drowned in an ocean of “propers

Second, such a distinction is merely an excuse for some people to make a negative approach toward morals and religion which are the basic factors of human .development

Third, we cannot speak of “what there should be” without discovering the existence of man and activating his positive potentials; this is what neither Western nor Eastern .philosophy knows how to do

The Advantages of the Collaboration between Science and Philosophy

The cooperation between science and philosophy can lead to the following :advantages in favor of human knowledge

Most scientists of experimental sciences believe that philosophers generalize, so – ۱ they live in a world apart from the one scientists spend their time discovering; this is .why scientists sometimes consider philosophers' work as worthless

By means of his experimental information, the scientist tries to analyze unities; the –۲ philosopher, on the other hand, tends to achieve comprehensive unities. Cooperation .between the two can lead to even more comprehensive unities in science

Due to technological advances and changes in scientific aims, science is always –۳

changing; philosophical principles, on the other hand, are fixed, and provide the best tool for quenching man's mental desire for combining. The generalizations philosophy includes can save science from falling into a scattered mess, and prevent it from .becoming trapped in its own technological devices

By making contact with science, philosophy can study and reconsider some of its -۴ fundamentals and principles. For example, science can help revise the law of

.causality and its details, thus eliminating its vagueness

Science has made amazing progress in discovering some parts of nature. If these -۵ advances are put to use on the path toward human unity – which philosophy is responsible for – man can make correct use of nature, and move from "what there is" to "what there should be." Science and philosophy should join ships to solve the problems of mankind. If the scientist and the philosopher are to have stronger cooperation, they should first acknowledge each other and then follow these :principles

a) The scientist and the philosopher should both know that analyzing the components of nature for the purpose of scientific research does not damage their interrelation, :for

اگر یک ذرّه را بر گیری از جای خلل یابد همه عالم سراپای

(.Disturb one particle, and the harmony of the whole universe will be disturbed)

b) Scientists should avoid statements like, "It's definitely this, and nothing else," for the universe is quite open, and man's limited senses and devices and internal ideals .shouldn't let make such generalizations

c) Scientists should accept the fact that there is a start and an end to the universe, even though science cannot verify them as observable physical phenomena. The :scientist should not fall into such a superficial approach in which

ما ز آغاز و ز انجام جهان بی خبریم اول و آخر این کهنه کتاب

افتاده است

We know nothing about the beginning and the end of this world; it seems that it is an) (.ancient, great book whose first and last pages have been lost

d) The scientist should realize that his contact with facts is done through his senses and experimental devices, so he can never directly achieve contact with all the facts :of the universe

ای خدا بنمای تو هر چیز را آن چنان که هست در خدعه سرا

O God, Who is aware of all obvious and hidden! Reveal everything in this deceitful) (.world as it truly is

(Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi

e) The scientist should realize that unless he understands and acknowledges the existence of divine wisdom and philosophy in the universe, he cannot claim to have gained any – not even the slightest – knowledge of the universe, for his knowledge and sensory and mental activities are components of the universe themselves, and :should be added to the components of nature. The wise human should say that

کاشکی هستی زبانی داشتی تا ز هستان پرده ها برداشتی

هر چه گویی ای دم هستی از آن پرده ای دیگر بر آن بستی، بدان

If only the universe could speak, and would thus reveal all its secrets, for all the) theorizing, imagination, reasoning and contradicting made by man about the universe cannot possibly

provide him with complete knowledge about the universe, for they are merely

(.phenomena and parts of the universe

(Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi

f) The scientist and the philosopher should believe in God so that they can interpret .the flow of natural laws and the movement in them

Following the above principles can not only provide the grounds for science and philosophy to cooperate, but also make them both work together on the path of wisdom. If science can help man discover one or many components of the world inside or outside, philosophy can show us the general principles dominant over the .universe

Wisdom and philosophy are able to make the human soul flourish. If science and philosophy were the two wings of a bird, wisdom would be its soul, which can take it from "what there is" to "what there should be." It is wisdom that provides man with .the truly original feeling of being

The Humanities

The humanities are the sciences concerned with man and various aspects and approaches related to him – that is why it is not limited to a particular field of science. Every science studies man from a certain point of view. Politics, for instance, involves the study of "man from the point of view of his management of social life in order to achieve the most desired goals," or economics concerns man from the viewpoint of .his material life management and adjustment

The humanities can be categorized into seven groups "according to their various aspects in relation to the central point

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":of the study of man – the human character

The humanities that concern man's natural life, like biology, physiology, pathology, -١ .and man's relationship with his surroundings

۲ - The humanities that relate to history, such as the natural history of man, the political history of man, etc.

۳ - The humanities related to economics, like work and its values, production and distribution, economic development, etc.

۴ - Those that are related to man's social life, like sociology, anthropology, management, politics, law, etc.

۵- The humanities that pertain to man's evolutional "propers," like culture, civilizations, literature, aesthetics, art, etc.

۶ - The humanities that concern man's mental potentials and activities, like psychology, psychiatry and identifying faculties such as the memory, imagination, will, choice, genius and discovery.

۷- The humanities that are related to values or virtues of individual or social evolution, like morals, religion and positive mysticism.

The above seven forms of the humanities should move on the path that can take the human character – the "self" – to perfection. The human character and its needs and potentials should always be the main factor in the humanities. Alas, it is not so nowadays, and the humanities have fallen into merely considering phenomena; they study the effects – human behaviors – instead of the real truth. Today's humanities are obsessed with statistics instead of scientifically accurate discussions. Ignoring the human "self" and its pivotal role in human life has led to these effects:

a) Important phenomena in man – like emotions, thought, intelligence, and will – have been studied without taking

into consideration the influence of the "self" in managing them. Due to the neglect toward the human "self," some scholars of the humanities have even come to ignore issues like thought, intelligence, imagination, will and freedom of choice, and only

.study their resulting behaviors

b) Some great values that are innately planted inside man have been ignored, like religion, morals and mysticism. Thus, ignorance toward the “self” has caused little attention to be paid for it to flourish, which is brought about by moral values and the sense of duty; the final goal of the “self,” being attracted by divinity, has been .forgotten

c) Misinterpretation of free will – flourishing freedom on the path to development and perfection – is a result of studying free will without considering the “self's” dominance over the positive and negative poles. Ignoring the “self” leads to misinterpretations of free will, and also other effects like nihilism and alienation. In other words, man's advances in providing his own luxury, he will feel totally void. Ignoring the “self” arises from two factors: one is hedonism and selfishness, and the other is various thoughts and beliefs, among which the following are the ones that have caused the major :deviations in the humanities

Extreme naturalism: Man has never been moderate in his mental endeavors. - ۱ Intellectuals both past and present have damaged evolutional flow of science. Due to their extreme naturalism, scientists and intellectuals have focused on analyzing physical phenomena and issues that are measurable, and pay little attention to the

”.essence of life and the human “self

The theory of the evolution of kinds, presented by scientists like Darwin, and - ۲ Lemark which brought great harm to the greatness and sacred value of the human ”.“self

The theory of the originality of power, supported by intellectuals like Nietzsche. - ۳ Although power is the primary condition for man's intelligible life in both domains of individual and social life, it must be the power with which each person respects the right for others to live too, not enslave them to his own advantage. People like

.Nietzsche have in fact interpreted themselves, not power and its usage

Do these supporters of the essence of power mean to describe that up to now it has been the powerful who have controlled life, or are they commanding the powerful to ?do so

They cannot be claiming to be describing the truth, for ignoring all the humanitarian deeds, the sacrifices human beings have made for each other, the resistances they have shown against atrocities and their struggle for freedom throughout history would mean ignoring the whole of history altogether! Thus, we must say that these supporters in fact express their own internal ideals and wishes, not a real historic .trend

۴- Freud's extremist theory concerning the sexual instinct also degraded the value of the human "self" and human moral virtues. Some of Freud's theories on various forms of sleep and his classifications of man's conscious (consciousness and unconsciousness) are considerably useful, but his negative approach toward man's qualities

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and mental greatness and also his misinterpretation of morals and religion deserve criticism; these theories caused a great deal of confusion and misjudgment among .the simpleminded

In brief, the humanities should move on the path of correctly interpreting the "self," :and also respond to these six questions

a) Who am I? b) Where have I come from? c) Where have I come to? d) Who am I ?with? e) Why have I come here? f) Where do I go from here

The Necessary Aims of the Philosophy of Science

Other philosophers of science generally focus on the methodology of science, and are not concerned with issues like the duties of science and the scientist; there is,

however, much more in the philosophy of science. Philosophers concerning science should take value-based issues into consideration, and determine the role of science in man's evolutional life. In other words, the philosophy of science should not ignore the relationship between science with man's life and the mission it has regarding .human evolution

If the philosophy of science is to move toward the development of human knowledge, :it should undertake these duties

The philosophy of science should express the necessity of the proportionate - ۱ .relationship between the cause and the claim

Unfortunately, some scientists, particularly in the humanities, do not present suitable reasons for their claims, for example when an intellectual claims that “man is evil by nature” or “man is pure good by nature” merely by observing human behavior. If the scholars of the humanities expressed the reasons for their claims clearly and properly, man would never have

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to name the twentieth century 'The Century of Alienation from Himself and Others,' nor would he become a tooth of rigidly cold machinery with all the emotions, .aesthetics and humanitarian tendencies he possesses

The philosophy of science must take any measures necessary to avoid proving - ۲ facts by means of statistics. Statistical proof and deduction in scientific theorems needs careful evaluation. Statistical studies can sometimes shows us an aspect of a phenomenon, but it should be never considered as a form of absolute discovery. .Statistics cannot identify a phenomenon from various points of view

The philosophy of science should make scientists realize that they should consider -۳ science like rays that first light up the insides of the scientists, then light up the whole society. In other words, the philosophy of science is to remind scientists that science :consists of two values

a) Science is innately brightly illuminated, and can enlighten man up too, so it is .innately valuable

b) It also has value as a means; it can be used on the path of human life, which can be .quite suitable and advantageous, too

The philosophy of science should reduce man's playfulness and pretension – ۴ concerning cognitive factors, like his senses, laboratory tools and any device that can .help man make contact with facts

By discovering the relationship between various fields of science and presenting – ۵ general viewpoints on ideologies, the philosophy of science can save researchers from being trapped in the vicious circles of their own fields, and make them seek the fundamental goals

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.of life

In other words, the philosophy of science should make researchers understand that although they may be experts in their own particular field, they may know little about .the domains beyond it, especially the fundamentals and aim of life

Though presenting methods of discovering facts in science is quite difficult, here is –۶ :how the philosophy of science can help

.a) Showing how to think correctly

.b) Evaluating entirely theorems that are presented to researchers in form of theories

.c) Freeing researchers from inadvertent reliance on predefined principles

Determining the importance and criterion for preferring various branches of – ۷ science to one another. The philosophy should prove that sciences are not equally important, and some may be preferred to others. The philosophy of science can identify the criterion by means of vast research and study. The criteria should be the

.intelligible life of human beings

Research on the philosophical origins and basics of each branch of science and -۸ .discovering their inter-relationships in order to discover the greater unity of sciences

Revising continually the principles and laws of science and nature and their" -۹ corresponding tools," the primary factor of which is establishing a free relationship with the concerned principles and laws; in other words, accepting them should not be as sacred as believing in divine rules, so that man might feel free to put them to use at .his wish

The philosophy of science should on one hand provide the crucial necessity to constantly revise scientific laws and theories and on the other hand show

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acceptable, mental methods for the revision. This does not mean, however, that there is no fixed scientific law; what it means is that there should be a modernist approach .to various scientific principles if different aspects of issues are to be considered

The point that is of high significance and calls for complete awareness and care is that even the mental aspects of science and knowledge – which are considered as unchangeably correct – need continual reconsideration; they must be exposed to the latest information and discoveries every day, as if we were discovering them again and again, for as we said, most scientific and industrial discoveries are caused by the modernist dynamism and mental endeavor of thinkers who thought the principles and .laws of their times should have been revised

The Philosophy of Science and the Humanities

Nowadays, the philosophy of science is focused mostly upon natural sciences rather than the humanities. The complexity of man's nature and identity makes it highly difficult for the philosophy of science to deal with. As we know, the humanities concern man, with all of his countless physical and spiritual aspects, which are further influenced by his will, decision, induction, imagination, wishes and ideals. Thus, we

cannot easily establish a set of laws and principles for the philosophy of science to .comment on their preliminaries, results, stability or variability

If we fit man's physical, spiritual, mental and psychological talents and behaviors into rigid molds and frames, we will degrade man down to the domain of other living ,beings, or even machines. Furthermore

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no science – not even philosophy – can be expected to be able to comment on man as it would about abstract mathematical topics. Mathematical activities are based upon quantity, whereas the humanities deal with qualitative issues and a series of realities. There are two factors that generally make the philosophy of science fail regarding the :humanities

The difficulty of the identification of the laws and principles governing man's four • relationships. Although a great deal of effort has been put into discovering humanity and human potentials and various aspects, he general knowledge and agreement on it is quite little, therefore the philosophy of science cannot successfully describe the .fundamentals and methods of the humanities

The diverse, contradicting reactions man shows in response to different situations • has also created complications for the philosophy of science making progress in the domain of the humanities. Man endeavors in many ways to fulfill his economic, legal and health needs, and since many of these needs are fixed, the humanities are able to describe basic economic needs and their consequences according to general laws and .principles

They can be studied from a philosophical point of view, but having fulfilled man's needs, it is impossible to foresee how the society will then be. We cannot predict, for example, after the fulfillment of the needs, whether people will definitely have a fine religion, culture, politics and moral ethics or not. In other words, when man's specific needs have been satisfied, his status regarding his

.four relationships – with God, himself, the universe and others – cannot be defined

Philosophical Doubt

Doubt implies the equality in the possibility of proving or denying a fact. Science, contrarily, is the undeniable discovery of facts. Doubt is naturally invariable, so philosophical doubt is not much different from other forms of doubt. When in doubt, the discoverer cannot discover the facts fully, for he feels himself in an obscured darkness. In other words, doubt can be described as a mixture of light and darkness. In primary ignorance, there is only darkness, whereas in doubt, there is some light. If man knows nothing at all, he will have no doubt, either. Doubt arises when there are both unknowns and certainties concerning a subject. We can categorize doubts into :two groups

Normal doubts, which arise from conflicts between reasons of the mind and those -۱ of sensory observations. It is the result of mistakes and lacks of knowledge man .encounters in life, and has no solution except stronger scientific endeavor

Doubts concerning divine issues and man's highest of uncertainties, like the -۲ supernatural. Such doubts cannot be resolved by thought – and heading toward God .is the only way to repel them

Even in normal doubts, contact with God can relieve man of the psychological stress :and suffering it may lead to. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) says

هر که را در جان خدا بنهد محک هر یقین را بازداند او ز شک

If man desires spiritual and mental development, God)

will be his best guide through the darkness of life, creating a light in him that can be the criterion that can distinguish fake from genuine and right from wrong – in other (.words, certainty from doubt

It is necessary to have a criterion that can distinguish certainty from doubt. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi believes, no matter how scientifically advanced man becomes, he will not be able to purify his soul completely of doubt. However, if he can relate his knowledge to divine knowledge, his doubts will not upset him anymore, for his soul will find a light that will serve as the criterion, providing him with serenity and .accuracy

No matter how accurate man's senses and tools may be, he will never be able to keep away from his doubts about his knowledge of the universe. Therefore, this doubt will always remain with him: what are the boundaries of his role as actor and spectator in the universe? However, if we can somehow make contact between the drop-sized knowledge we have to dive in the oceans of divine knowledge; then our doubts would .no longer make us suffer

:The factors leading to doubt can be divided into two groups

a) Some believe that doubt arises from man's acts in discovering facts about the world. In ancient times, some people believed strongly in doubting, for they thought that errors of their senses influenced their judgment of facts. Now that man knows about sensory mistakes, this factor has been eliminated. The playfulness of

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the senses only leads to doubt in facts when we cannot guide their playfulness toward our observation's advantage; with technological advances now, we cannot consider .our senses to play a crucial role in creating doubt any longer

b) Some others believe that since there are a few unknown things in the world, and all .components of the universe are interrelated, philosophical doubts are inevitable

There are shortcomings in this viewpoint, too. There are a great many facts that are clear to man without the least shadow of a doubt; furthermore, without accepting a series of unquestionable realities, human knowledge would never be able to exist. On the other hand, having doubt in some components does not conflict with belief in the

.whole system

For instance, we may see a painting full of hundreds of lines, shapes and colors, and we are certain that the artist has had a definite subject in his mind to use them for; however, we may not be able to clearly understand all of them. If we believe in the overall harmony in the world of nature, our lack of knowledge about some .phenomena and relationships do not contradict the whole system

Doubts vary in subject and the degree of certainty in the units surrounding them. Here, we can divide doubts into deep and superficial kinds. If our knowledge of a subject we are doubtful of is superficial, our doubt about it will also be superficial. If we know a lot about it, however – that is, if there

is more light on the subject – we will be in deep doubt. For instance, if we do not know much about whether "internal freedom is variable or not," we will have superficial doubt about it, but the more we know about internal freedom and change, the more .dark points there will be, and the deeper our doubts will become

The doubts thinkers and intellectuals have should not be considered to be the same in all cases, either. Bertrand Russell, for example, had a profound knowledge of logic, mathematics and Western philosophy, but he did not know Eastern philosophy, psychology, ethics and religion; his doubts on all of the mentioned topics cannot be .regarded the same

Doubt is a phenomenon essential to the progress of human culture and civilization. Doubt about formal knowledge, however, must be for the purpose of discovering newer facts and secrets, and it should not cause man to cast doubt on everything. If he does not intend to discover new knowledge, he may question the whole fundamentals of human thought patterns. This is no longer philosophical doubt; it is a mental illness. In facts, doubts should not be regarded as originally, innately desirable, but rather as a means to escape decadent, archaic knowledge, and make efforts to reach new facts. Some have referred to doubt as the "means to flee from rigid, fixed

".laws and principles

Science and Philosophy in Intelligible Life

Some scientists and intellectuals have done research on whether realities like science, art, management and politics are virtually valuable or not. Some believe

that science, art and politics are virtually desirable, whereas some others think that without mental endeavors on the path of human life, they would be worthless. The value of science and philosophy should be considered in connection with intelligible .life

Intelligible life is the life in which all of man's positive aspects are fulfilled, and as we know, one of the most fundamentals of positive human aspects is seeking the .supreme aim of life, that can interpret and justify life intelligently and logically

.In natural life, science can intoxicate man and make power overcome righteousness

Science can cast light upon one aspect of man, granting him the power to reveal facts. This kind of using this power is only possible in intelligible life. We know that gaining awareness of facts is one thing, and adjusting man's relationship with them is something totally different, as being aware of many issues concerning righteousness and justice is quite different from behaving righteously and justly toward others. In intelligible life, science never serves to inflate the natural self, promote arrogance and .boastfulness or taking advantage of others

:In brief, science can be used in two different ways

:Discovering facts in order to adjust and moderate the four relationships -۱

a) Man-God

b) Man-himself

c) Man-the universe

d) Man-other human beings

This form of science is like a pure light shining onto man's nature. This science is pure light, created by God, the One who enlightens the whole universe. It is with this form of science that man can activate his abstract perfection and greatness

.i.e., innate light) toward reality)

۲- Understanding realities in order to reinforce man's desires, or inflating the natural self. When science is used in this way, man considers himself as the end and others as the means. In other words, he intends to dominate others. Such a science will lead to nothing but disaster and doom for man. It will alienate man from himself, which will .make him also alienated from the universe and other human beings

Anthropology: A New Scope

Theories on Human Nature

:There are four theories on the reality of human nature

۱- Some intellectuals believe that they know man's nature quite well, and consider :man a meritorious being. This theory may be categorized into two sub-theories

a) Some believe man to be the most well developed being found in nature, the .absolutely perfect creation

There are some points of criticism to this theory: firstly, we do not have enough knowledge of nature to claim man to be its perfect being. Second, we must not confuse man's complex aspects and diverse talents with his being the most complete .of all creatures

a) Some other intellectuals believe that although human beings are great, meritorious creatures, they cannot be entitled as the most perfect in nature, for apart from a .meager few, mankind is drowning in its selfishness and desires for pleasure

Some intellectuals believe that man is cruel by nature. They see man as a selfish, -۲ inconsiderate being who thinks of nothing but his own benefit. As Nero once said, "If only all men had one

neck, so I could kill them all with one single stroke!" Anastas, who taxed the air people .breathed, is another example

If we study the history of mankind, we will not come to accept this theory, for despite all of the animal-like conceited figures, there have also been men of great valor and .glory

Some believe that the fundamentals of human nature are still unknown to us, but -۳ we do know that man has shown on great many occasions his selfishness and desire for pleasure. Many human beings have considered themselves the end, and many others have assumed the role of being the means to the end. This theory suffers from two weaknesses: first, we cannot claim that we know nothing at all about the fundamentals of man's nature. We are aware of some aspects of man. Some physiological, psychological and social aspects of human nature have been identified. We cannot deny the endeavors anthropologists have made. Secondly, although history has seen selfish vultures of human beings, it has also witnessed men of the .highest human values

Man is believed to have a great variety of potentials and talents, only some of - ۴ which have been investigated or known. We can study the activation of man's :potentials from two points of view

.a) Activating the human potentials related to man's compulsory life

b) Man's attention and great eagerness for his own perfection. Some human beings have been successful in activating their potentials. These seekers of greatness and perfection have always

saved human virtues from annihilation. According to this theory, man possesses both .glorious, incredible virtues as well as evil and corruption

The Human Nature in the Qur’an

Some verses of the Qur’an show some of man's psychological elements and positive :and negative aspects, not the nature and identity of man. A few of such verses are

خلق الانسان ضعيفا

(Man was created a weakling.”(۴:۲۸“

خلق الانسان من عجل

(Man was created of haste.” (۲۱:۳۷“

ان الانسان خلق هلوعا اذا مسه الشر جزوعا و اذا مسه الخير منوعا

Surely man was created fretful; when evil visits him, impatient, when good visits him,“ (grudging.” (۷۰:۱۹-۲۱

It is impossible to take the true identity and nature of man into consideration using these verses. In fact, since man's degrees of elevation and degradation are truly infinite, he cannot be totally discovered. The potentials and talents mentioned by the Qur’an express not only man's identity, but some of the characteristics and qualities he can show. If the Qur’an did explain the elements of man's congeniality and nature, .it would not need to mention some exceptional human beings or condemn others

والعصر ان الانسان لفی خسر الا الذین امنو و عملوا الصالحات

By the afternoon! Surely man is in the way of loss, save those who believe and do“ (righteous deeds.” (۱۰۳:۱-۳

The Qur’anic verse mentioning that man has been created of haste does not imply the nature or identity of man either, for haste is a certain quality about how we move from a starting-point to a destination; it is not an external, independent fact about the movement that can be considered

a part of human nature. Furthermore, the following verse cautions man for his haste, .so if it were all or part of his innate nature, it would be impossible for him to give it up

خلق الانسان من عجل ساريكم اياتى فلا تستعجلون

Man was created of haste. Assuredly I shall show you My signs; so demand not that I" (make haste." (۲۱:۳۷

Human Characteristics

There are various anthropological theories. One theory, pertaining to materialists, believes that man is a harmonious machine that has achieved perfection and complexity through the laws of nature. According to this theory, human beings should .be considered just like other creatures, for he has no identity different from them

There are a great many differences between man and machines, the least of them being the element life. Man has a huge number of characteristics no machine can have. We have listed ۲۳۲ human characteristics based on man's identity and relationships with others. However, some are so diverse themselves that the list can :be actually considered to include ۹۵۰ characteristics. Some of them are

Man's ego, ۲) Man's awareness of his ego, ۳) Man's attitude, which shows the quality (۱ of his character, ۴) Endeavoring for perfection, ۵) Reinforcing his will, ۶) Autolysis, ۷) Macro mania, ۸) Self-consciousness and self-alienation toward peers, ۹) Self-ignorance and the possibility for self-discovery,

Self-loss, ۱۱) Self-denial, ۱۲) Conscious conscience, self-conscious conscience and (۱۰ unconscious conscience, ۱۳) Moral conscience (with ۵۰ different functions), ۱۴) Pride and glory, ۱۵) Desire for fame, ۱۶) Self-defense, ۱۷) Psychological complexes, ۱۸) Internal

emotions, feelings and anxieties (over ۱۰۰ different types), ۱۹) Introversion and

,extroversion

Analytical and combination thought, ۲۱) An existent called the heart, with over ۱۰۰ (۲۰ functions, ۲۲) Intellectualism and solidity of thought, ۲۳) Hope, ۲۴) Dissatisfaction of monotony, ۲۵) Wishing, ۲۶) Denial, ۲۷) Sacrifice, ۲۸) Seeking benefit over others, ۲۹) .Idealism, ۳۰) Worship, etc

Human Nature

The nature and temperament of man – his original creation, his fundamental existence – is one of the most important issues of anthropology. There is much debate whether man has a nature or not. There are three reasons upon which those :against human nature deny its existence

Man's psychological, instinctive, and mental forces and activities have been - ۱ identified by various branches of science, and no sign of human nature has been .discovered by any of them

If there were human nature, the various aspects of human existence would not - ۲ .suffer so much change and upheaval

The diversity and differences among the individual and social behavior of human - ۳ .beings, is in conflict with the existence of a commonality called human nature

However, if the human nature is defined correctly, the three problems mentioned :above will vanish. The definition of the human nature is

The human nature – the natural disposition of the human heart – is the natural, orderly flow of the forces inside man. Therefore, there is a nature for each of man's .instinctive, mental and psychological forces, which also forms its natural, logical flow

According to the above definition, each of man's powers and potentials are included in

man's nature. In other words, the orderly, logical flow of every power and potential of

mankind is called its nature. Now we can present counterarguments for the three :problems we posed above

First, we cannot deny their claim that human nature is not included among man's psychological, mental and instinctive activities, for those who believe in human nature do not intend to prove a separate, psychological reality or a body part which may be denied; every power man possesses, in its natural, logical course of action, is a part of .human nature

The second problem – stating that the changes man undergoes conflict with human nature – does not seem correct if we take into consideration the survival of human aspects throughout all the changes mankind has seen. For instance, thought, one of man's aspects, does not undergo change during all the ups and downs of man's life. .Only the raw material or subjects related to human thought are interpreted

Thirdly, the third problem – defying human nature based on the differences existing between individual and collective thoughts and behaviors – also appears to be incorrect, for if we are to recognize human differences as the criterion, we should not recognize any other of the human aspects, either. For example, do people not differ in their ideas? Are humans not different in the emotions and reactions they show in response to motivations and conscientious activities? Must we defy thoughts, ?emotions and the conscience

As we have already mentioned, the human nature consists of the

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logical, orderly flow of each of the human forces. Now, by means of comparing it with each of the human forces, we can come to a more accurate analysis of the human :nature

Thought: Thought includes activities done on known things in order to discover the - ۱ unknown, or activities done on the means in order to achieve a goal. If human thought acts logically and omits or selects the means correctly to achieve his end, he has

moved on the path of his intrinsic nature; however, if he falls astray from the correct way of thinking, and behaves illogically, we may say that his thought has deviated .from human nature

Will: If the human will chooses and activates the useful motives, his will arises from -۲ .a healthy, sound human nature

Emotions and Feelings: If man's emotional behavior is rational in response to the -۳ stimuli that arouse his feelings and emotions, and do not fall for imaginations, flashbacks or scattered thoughts, his feelings will have a healthy human nature; the .slightest distortion in the normal flow of feelings and emotions will harm them

Selfishness: If acting on the path of self-preservation and aiming for human - ۴ development, selfishness is compatible with the true, original human nature. Yet, when it falls into hedonistic pleasures, it deviates from the real course of human .nature, and becomes self-conceit

Conscience: Conscience is one of man's greatest internal powers. If it acts - ۵ legitimately, it will have a healthy human nature. For instance, if the human conscience proves

him right and wrong, or makes righteous judgments and scorns and tortures man .when he sins, it has moved on its rational path

:The Supreme Feeling of Responsibility: It can behave in two ways -۶

a) The Supreme Feeling of Responsibility toward People: In this case, man sympathizes for the joys and sorrows others feel, and considers love toward his .fellow human beings superior to all other aspects of social life

b) The Supreme Feeling of Responsibility for Man's Own Self-development: Man does not feel his existence in the universe is aimless; he is always in attempt to lead his .existence to perfection

Both forms of the supreme feeling of responsibility mentioned above can be in .accordance with the human nature if man acts rationally

All human beings generally have an original human nature, which is pure and has the potential to seek greatness and perfection. If man succeeds in protecting his pure nature from deviations, inculcations, and the pre-defined grounds of an unhealthy society, he can keep it pure and original. These verses from the Holy Qur'an imply the :existence of the human nature

فاقم وجهک للدین حنیفا فطرۀ الله التی فطر الناس علیها لا تبدیل لخلق الله ذلک الدین القیم و لکن اکثر الناس لایعلمون

So set thy face to the religion, a man of pure faith – God's original upon which He" originated mankind. There is no changing in God's creation. That is the right religion— (but most people know it not." (۳۰:۳۰

صبغه الله و

من احسن من الله صبغه

Having faith in God, and submitting to God's will on the way to development and" perfection is in fact being colored by God – and who can color [human lives] better (than God?"(۲:۱۳۸

Man's Internal Potentials

There are potentials inside man that can be activated by external factors. Some intellectuals have claimed that there is no reality apart from what external factors .create in man

We disapprove this theory, for the external factors that influence man internally produce results different from themselves. Some behaviorists ignore man's .potentials, although they do not clearly deny their existence

:Now we will present several reasons for the necessity of human potentials

۱ - Denying Man's Internal Potentials Casts Doubt on All Identities Man Discovers about Realities: Every phenomenon has an identity which is definite and clear. For instance, we see something in the distance, and we are not sure whether it is a person or a rock; the object itself, however, has its own, definite identity, anyway. If man had no potentials inside him, his behaviors and actions should be indefinite – and this is impossible, for indefinite identity in the world outside is not observable.

Therefore, we either have to consider those potentials arising from general concepts inside human beings – which is wrong, for general concept are fictitious products of the human mind – or we have to consider them as part of man's inside: there are realities inside man that create certain behaviors and reaction when in contact with external factors.

۲- The

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Phenomenon of Inventions, Discoveries and Innovations: If discoveries and inventions do not originate from man's internal potentials, they must arise from external factors; however, there is not similarity or association between external factors and the discoveries and inventions made by man.

The inventions and discoveries do not arise from the great deal of information man has about a subject. If external factors could lead to discoveries and inventions by themselves, anybody who had them would become an inventor or a discoverer.

۳ - Different Behaviors – Political, Judicious, and Artistic: Some people have specific behaviors. Some seem to have a political kind of style, others a military, judicious, artistic or managerial behavior. The fact that people have different behaviors proves that they must have the potential needed for it. For example, if one has an artistic kind of behavior, he must have artistic potential, too.

۴ - The Activation of the “Self” that Manages Man's Life: As we have already mentioned, man's soul is abstract, and has been interpreted in various ways, like the

“self” and the “ego.” The external factors that enter man's life cannot be regarded as parts of the existence of the “self,” for they are by no means comparable. The “self” is not a result of external factors; however, the accumulation of these factors inside ”.human life can bring about the activation of the “self

In brief, if the 'self' potential did not exist inside the phenomenon of life, external factors – that cannot consciously save their own existence against any

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'.creature – could never create the 'self

Mental Activities: We arrange the pictures we get from the world outside in our - ۵ mind. The mind regards some phenomenon as true and some others false. The mind's potentials help it carry out various tasks. If man did not possess the potential of wisdom, for instance, it could not use its wisdom in any task at all. Without the potential of moral conscience, man would never accept a series of “shoulds” and deny others. Likewise, if man did not have the potential to seek beauty, he would never .enjoy watching beautiful things

Interpreting Opposite Potentials

Man is a being capable of showing himself to have both the highest and greatest of moral ethics and the most vile and vulgar qualities. Now that he possesses two opposite kinds of qualities, can he be said to have internal opposite potentials and talents? Will the fact of having opposite potentials and talents contradict man's unity ?of personality and the inseparability of his soul

There is no doubt that man has internal opposites. Man can be more degraded and filthier than animals, or higher than angels; no one doubts that. The point that calls for consideration is how to interpret these conflicting qualities. Man has a variety of potentials. He can become a judge, or maybe an artist. He has both the potential to be .righteous, and to be selfish and victimize the right for his own desires

Our interpretation for such opposite potentials is that man cannot activate conflicting

potentials in the

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same circumstances – he cannot simultaneously be righteousness and selfishly cruel. He may be righteous at times, but under certain conditions become cruel. We may :consider man's conflicting potentials from two points of view

Positive, Opposite Potentials: An example is the potentials for crude emotions and -۱ purely intelligent ones. The former are not any principle or law other than their .causes, whereas the latter cannot do anything without obeying the law

Potentials Implying Possibility and Power: Many qualities can arise in man, although -۲ he does not innately have them. In fact, the appearance of atrocious, vulgar qualities is the result of the disappearing or destruction of man's innate potentials; man has no .innate negative quality of his own

The former group mentioned above can be harmonized and organized in order to result in man's mental and spiritual development. For instance, if man's powers of thought and intelligence are enhanced, his crude emotions will become highly .elevated ones

The latter group, which are potential, cannot even flourish at the same time, let alone be harmonized. If man's potential for justice is activated, for example, at that moment he cannot be cruel and unfair. Thus, when a certain potential is activated, its opposite cannot possibly arise alongside it; if the conditions and circumstances change, however, the opposite may arise. Man must always beware of the opposites of good .qualities arising within him

In a word what God has blessed man with is purely positive, constructive potentials. Even the nature of the filthiest of man's

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instincts is useful and good. It is man who neutralizes his positive, constructive

potentials, and abuses his instincts. The fact that man possesses various potentials does not conflict with the fact that his nature is abstract, either. The human nature has to be non-physical, and supernaturally united to be able to have different potentials. If man's nature were not supernatural, it would be impossible to interpret and justify the interference, overlapping and observable inseparability of his .potentials

("The Identity of the "Self" (the " Ego

All living beings have a "self." That is how they can resist harmful factors. In plants, the "self" is limited, and they cannot defend it against everything. The resistance against .harmful factors in plants is not vast

In animals, the "self" is more apparent, for they tend to reach pleasure and avoid pain. .Animals are able to fight natural, fatalistic laws much more than plants

In the case of human beings, however, we see a "self" consisting of many units – cognition, intelligence, imagination, affirmation, hallucination, discovery, decision, free ... will, interest in beauty

:"Man possesses several "selves

.A "self" the same as other living beings -۱

.Wider selves like cognition, intelligence, imagination, thought and many others -۲

If psychological terminology does not allow us to call these phenomena 'selves,' we can express it in another way: the 'self' together with dozens of other highly significant means that have arisen in various fields, and can reinforce and supervise ".human endeavor and activity units

Deep "selves:" Using -۳

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.his "self," man can supervise and dominate his actions much better

Considering the vastness of the human “self” and its tendency toward progress and :perfection, we may categorize it via “width and length” categorization

a) Wider selves: Having gone through the preliminary stages of development, man possesses a natural self. This natural self is the non-self-conscious aspect of the self, .and develops as time goes by

In fact, man acquires a “moral” self, possesses a 'scientific' self, gets a 'social' self, and .has an exclusive 'divine' self

b) “Length” selves: Since birth, man develops both from a physical, natural point of view, and the development and perfection of his “self.” As Jalal-addin Muhammad :Molawi (Rumi) says

از جمادی مُردم و نامی شدم وز نما مُردم ز حیوان سر زدم

مُردم از حیوانی و آدم شدم پس چه ترسم؟ کی ز مردنکم شدم

حمله دیگر بمیرم از بشر تا بر آرم از ملایک بال و پر

وز ملک هم بایدم جستن ز جو کلّ شی هالک الّا وجهه

بار دیگر از ملک پرّان شوم آنچه آن در وهم ناید، آن شوم

پس عدم گردم، عدم چون ارغنون گویدم

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کانّا الیه راجعون

Apparently, I stopped being like an animal; it seemed that sort of life died in me. But) that death elevated me to higher states of human perfection. So why should I fear these successive deaths, for they are lifting me up toward development? These deaths made me even more alive. I was not losing anything; I was merely heading for a higher stage of life. After that, I was at the stage of humanity for a while. Now if I lose my human body and give myself to human death, angelic spirit will fill my soul,

and fly me toward divinity. Soon, I will even surpass angels, and head for a hugely greater world. No point or state living beings move on the path of has stability or eternity, for everything is mortal, except His Divine Essence. Then, I will even climb beyond being like angels, and reach a state reason and wisdom can never fathom; I will head for oblivion, which is the general rhythm of the universe conducted by God's (.'Mighty Will, telling us that 'we will all return to God

:We can also present another classification for the self

The Natural Self: This kind of self is common between man and animals. The - ١ natural self cannot step out of fatalistic circles, or supervise and dominate various affairs. At the level of the natural self, man acts in accordance with fatalistic factors .and principles

The Human Self: Having stepped out of the natural self, man -٢

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finds his human self. Justice, love for other human beings and paying attention to other morals and virtues become significant. With this kind of "self," man can bring the natural self and its various activities under control. He is not totally free of fatalistic issues, however, for the natural self is combined with the human self, and plays a role .in man's deeds

The Human-divine Self: If man's soul and spirit are elevated, he can go beyond his -٣ normal human self, and reach a "human-divine" self. The spirit is released from all the .chains trapping it, and finds divine freedom

:We may divide the identity of the self into two kinds

a) The self with the identity of the natural self-conveys the management of purely natural life, which exists in all living beings, from animals to even just, spiritually elevated humans. Its only purpose is to inflate the self and dominate anything other than the self, considering everything else at the service of enhancing the inflation and .dominance of the self. All good or evil are evaluated by selfish criteria

This kind of self will trod on all moral virtues to get what it wants, burn down the whole world for a meager desire. It is totally "self-oriented." This is the self that has caused the natural and animal-like aspect of the history of mankind to continue, hindering the history of humanity. The qualities of the purely natural self are:

- It considers itself the leader, and obeys itself.
- It is morbidly selfish

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and arrogant.

- The natural self-fights anything that does not appeal to its desires.
- It worships itself.
- It has a tendency toward hedonism.
- It can mislead man from righteousness and justice.
- It denies all harmony and order in the universe.
- It considers wishes and favoritism prior to discipline and order.
- It regards itself as the end and others as the means.

b) The self with the identity of dynamic progress toward perfection: This form of self is always elevating; it never spins around itself. It does not lose its perfectionist, progressive identity, for it never falls into selfishness or arrogance. This kind of self never regards the purely natural self as the criterion for morals and virtues, for it knows too well that man's true rise to perfection is possible only outside the natural self, which merely aims to achieve pleasure and repel harm.

When man possesses a dynamic self, he will at least:

- always assess himself,

- take himself seriously, and
- care about himself.

Self–assessment

Self-assessment is higher than self-knowledge. Seldom do human beings attempt to assess themselves, and far fewer of them are able to do so. The reasons for its difficulty are:

١- Man should be aware of his own mental aspects and internal settings that affect his present and future.

٢- He should know qualitatively and quantitatively about the power in him.

٣- Know exactly what his relationship with the laws and principles that cause evolution and development is.

Self-assessment should not turn into absolute independence of character, for then it would become a sort of

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self-battle, leading to a war against others, too. By independence of character we mean that man may consider his own existence as being far superior to all values and morals. The only kind of independence that means is the independence of selfishness. Cultures can have great influence on how people assess themselves; some cultures totally ignore the issue of educating people how to assess themselves, which is absolutely essential – for even a short time.

Taking Oneself Seriously

When man takes himself seriously, he will neither deceive himself nor others. The following steps are necessary if man is to take himself seriously:

١- He should know himself thoroughly, correctly assessing his internal potentials.

.Having done that, he will feel the desire for the highest aim of life -۲

Serious attention to the highest aim of life makes man understand that he cannot -۳ .achieve it without activating his potentials and powers

Once man realizes that he cannot take his existence as a joke, he cannot submit to -۴ the laws of nature or even other people. He is dependent upon God's will, and that .should be taken seriously

No force can penetrate into the human ego, for God has built it like a forbidden area into which only man himself can find way. If he does not break the sacred security of .his territory and tries not to deceive himself, no other being can enter it

Good Intentions for the Self

Man cannot be well-intentioned about himself unless a) realities of good intentions and perfections are

.presented to him, and b) the self itself becomes important to man, too

If the self is not important to man, he will never attempt to discover what is useful or harmful to him. The two factors mentioned above account for why many human .beings are not well-intentioned about their own selves

There are many factors that lead to the self being considered as worthless, the most important of which is the activation of the self without any free endeavor. As we know, man feels his ego arise in him after childhood, without having done any attempt to acquire it. It is the lack of attempt to acquire the self that makes man feel no .importance in it, and do no study on its characteristics

Education is of great significance in self-discovery. Unfortunately, societies that neglect the role of religion and moral ethics in various aspects of human life, do not feel enough respect and value for the life of human beings so as to acknowledge its existence, and consider its education as important. If the "self" were of importance to

man today, millions of human lives would not be at the peril of tyrants' whimsical .desires and wishes

Self–alienation

Self-alienation involves the lack of the self, the absence of some of the elements of the ego which may be caused by several factors. Considering the evolutions of the self and its definite or indefinite state, we can list eight meanings for self-alienation. :They can be categorized into two main groups

Negative Self–alienation .۱

Negative self-alienation includes the lack

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of the self or the absence of some of its elements that make man fail in his life. This :form of self-alienation can be of six kinds

Ignorance about the self: This kind of self-alienation has engulfed most of - ۱ humanity today. Although prophets of God and great men of wisdom have preached man to discover themselves ever since the history of mankind began, their preaching has seldom been entirely fruitful. Self-knowledge is so important that an ideology is useless if it cannot make man discover himself and what is proper and appropriate to .his life

The point here is that with all the unknown and unsolved mysteries in man, how can the self-alienation caused by lack of knowledge of the domains of human life be eradicated? Considering the quality of "self-familiarity," the answer should be quite obvious, for it is one of the characteristics of human life that when it gains some extent of knowledge of its self, it can save itself from self-alienation only to that extent. Of course, if man has the capability to discover himself but does not do so, he .will suffer from one of the most degraded forms of self-alienation

Losing the self: In this kind of self-alienation, one sees one's self in another person. -۲

:It is caused by two basic factors

a) Extreme extroversion, where man thinks too highly of “other than himself,” and is drowned in its attraction. Such an inadvertent tendency toward others can alienate man from himself. The only way to escape this

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kind of self-alienation is by paying attention to the fact that no advantage possessed ”.by the “other than oneself” should make one lose one's “own self

b) Sometimes it is the weakness and incapability of the “self” that cannot safeguard its independence. The feeling of humiliation may lead to such weakness and .incompetence

These two factors can make man feel that he exists actually outside himself – feel .that his life exists in others

Self-defiance: If one knows that cruelty to others actually means cruelty toward -۳ oneself, and that escaping duties is in fact escaping one's own self, and that lying can distort reality, but still does cruel deeds and tells lies, has in fact defied his own self. When man feels his internal tendency toward the philosophy and aim of life, but destroys it with his own desires and wishes, is he not defying himself? Denying the .beginning and the end of creation is a sign of self-alienation

Bargain-like self-alienation: This kind of self-alienation is based upon greed for -۴ benefit and advantage. Those who suffer from it consider themselves as merchandise that can be traded with others. They are ready to lose even themselves .in return for a profit

Living with an unreal self: This kind of self-alienation involves ignoring one's own -۵ elements of life. Man neglects his own potentials and lives with his unreal self. There :are two kinds of unreal self

a) The self that is full of desires, hopes and aims that pertain to selfishness. This is the

unreal

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self that normal people deal with. Their self, in other words, is a mere set of baseless .tendencies and wishes

b) The self that copies and imitates the life of others. Many human beings live with the self of others, not their own. They imitate the behavior and thoughts of other people; .their life is no more than a photograph of others' life

Ignoring the power and advantages of the self: Man has a great many potentials, -۶ which are what make him superior to other living beings. Outstanding figures of history have been those who have succeeded in activating these potentials. This is the kind of self-alienation man will suffer from if he cannot manage his potentials and advantages. In fact, several factors make him escape his potentials, and become self-:alienated. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi says

جمله عالم ز اختیار و هست خود می گریزند در سر سرمست خود

تا دمی از هوشیاری وارهند ننگ خمر و بنگ بر خود می نهند

می گریزند از خودی در بیخودی یا به مستی یا به شغل ای مهتدی

People are running away from their own existence, their own free will… but where) to? To stupefying infatuations that will take them far away from consciousness and awareness – if, even, momentarily. They turn to drugs and alcohol and submit to being dehumanized. With the

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occupation or infatuation they acquire, they are fleeing from self-consciousness toward unconsciousness, but they do not know that they will be pulled back into their natural, physical self by the chains of their desires and whims, for their escape was (.not upon God's command

If man loses supreme self-awareness, then conflicting and contradicting forms of awareness and destructive forms of freedom can bring about his intoxication and .self-alienation

Positive Self–alienation .۲

Here, we refer to intelligible developments of the self. According to the end it may :have, this kind of development may be of two forms

a) Positive self-alienation with natural, normal orientation and destination: Man's life undergoes developments as time and his life pass. His advance in age also brings about evolutions in his relationship with the universe. Another factor is more knowledge, which can change man's self. The new-formed self can in turn alienate man from his previous selves. By gaining knowledge, man acquires more new "selves." In many cases, the new self is caused by the natural, fatalistic flow of life; that self should be discarded, for developments in the self that are not caused by the .freedom of human character have no value

b) Self-alienation on the path to evolution: This form of self-alienation is caused by evolutions in man's internal existence. It differs from the former kind of self-alienation, however, in the fact that it happens at the individual's free will. The individual attempts to find a new self on the path to evolution. In fact, this form of self-alienation involves abandoning

previous selves in order to achieve a developed, evolved self. Such a new self is .impossible without making use of freedom

:When discussing this form of self, we must keep a few points in mind

The factor of endeavor and adjusting the self on the path to evolution is far beyond -۱ passive, mortal selves. This basic factor may be considered as man's higher .knowledge of supreme ideals

This theory is quite useful in finding the grounds needed and the correct explanations about the means to pass on to evolutional 'selves,' but it cannot provide the management factor that is able to correctly give the 'selves' and their means (the knowledge, experiences and gradual familiarity with ideals) evolutional adjustment.

۲- The origin of man's endeavor toward an evolved self lies in his spiritual aspect. In other words, we must admit that man has a spiritual aspect and that it is capable of guiding his selves on the path to evolution and perfection.

۳- When the selves are guided onto the path to evolution, the previous ones are not eliminated, for not all of the previous elements and aspects are negative or imperfect enough to be deleted; they do contain elements necessary for the new selves, like correct ideals. Furthermore, some elements of the previous selves can provide the preliminary development and growth for the new ones.

۴- A more evolved self means changes inside the self in order to achieve more independence and eliminate fatalistic states surrounded by the changes in nature and other human beings.

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Evolution in the self makes man's potentials and talents become activated, changes his internal conflicts into constructive ones, and increases the capacity of his existence.

۵- The evolutions in the new self, along with use of freedom, eliminate the chains that trap man, granting him greater internal freedom.

۶- The human self must take eternal prosperity into consideration if it intends to evolve, for as the eternal capital, the self cannot be exchanged for anything except eternal prosperity.

۷- By achieving eternity, the self becomes immortal due to divine immortality. This does not mean, however, that it moves to another world in which it becomes immortal; it does mean, either, that the self is totally demolished. We are referring to

the elevating evolution of the self in this world – the expansion and development of the various aspects of human existence.

۸- Along with any change or development the self undergoes, it finds new characteristics, too. If it achieves divine immortality, it will never think about gaining advantages or personal benefit, or competing against "other than the self."

The Qualities of Existence Dependent upon the Self

If man's existence becomes dependent upon his self, he can save himself from negative self-alienation. In other words, the human self must be independent in selecting goals and means and what is proper for man's life. There are three points that should be kept in mind about existence dependent upon the self:

۱- When man's existence is dependent upon the human self, it does not mean that it is abstractly isolated from natural and human factors; it should

not be dependent upon what others do, like a musical instrument that needs to be played by others.

۲- Dependency upon the self implies obeying the logical principles of life.

۳- Self-dependent existence does not mean exploiting other human beings as one's tools. If man is free of negative self-alienation, he will never claim "I am the end, and the others are the means," for that would take him to the inflation of his natural self, not the independence of his human self.

The steps needed to be taken in order to return to the self are:

a) First, man must become aware of the issue of life and its value and significance. Humans cannot regain their lost existence without proving the independence value of life.

b) Human laws must have origins far superior to the desires of natural life; likewise,

the executors of the law must also have supernatural tendencies so that they can .guide people toward an existence dependent on the self

c) Education is quite significant in making the existence dependent upon the self-embrace reality. Education must devote all of its efforts and use all of its skills and appropriate expertise ever since man is born into trying to make him understand that he is for now merely a meager stream of existence originating from the foothills of history, genetics and the environment; quite soon, however, the immense power hidden in him will change him into an ocean so great that all the other streams, rivers and lakes will turn to him for

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help. In order to demonstrate to man this amazing development, it is necessary to introduce him to thousands of outstanding figures in history who have taken great .steps toward changing man's goals and way of life

d) Man must gain a clear understanding of independence and dependence; he should realize that total independence is impossible, and total dependence also leads to .man's alienation

Finding the Roots of Man's Weaknesses

:In our analysis of human shortcomings, the following factors can be mentioned

۱- The dependence of human life upon realities outside it: Man's physical aspect depends on a series of internal and external factors that follow specific rules; these factors sometimes bring about shortcomings in man. In the spiritual aspect – concerning man's potentials and instincts – there are extremely delicate and sensitive relationships that may be distorted and disabled by other powerful factors. Thus, man possesses a series of physical and spiritual abilities and limitations he cannot escape. These limitations do not however, a) inhibit the order and harmony in his life, and b) .man has no responsibility concerning his involuntary inabilities

۲- The shortcomings caused by emergent ignorance: Man never knows what kind of

.spiritual or mental state he will be in the next moment

ای برادر عقل یک دم با خود آر دم به دم در تو خزان است و بهار

Do thought and intuition inside Yourself, and you will find that various states and) (.moods Keep arising in you. Indeed, springs and autumns rise and fall in us

,Thus, as Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) sees it

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.the human spiritual states – if not derogatory and vulgar – can be related to God

Man may guess what his future spiritual state may be by means of comparisons and metaphors, but he can never have definite knowledge of it. This kind of shortcoming makes man moderate in his feelings of innate greed and ambition, and prevents him from rebellion. By reinforcing human thought and intelligence in the knowledge of .facts, this can be overcome

Voluntary shortcomings that originate from man himself: The two weaknesses - ۳ mentioned above are not considered as imperfections in the creation of man, for they are involuntary and cannot be eliminated entirely; however, man suffers from a series of shortcomings that are brought about by actions he does at his own free will, and is responsible himself for overcoming them. Wars, atrocities, lies, and addictions are examples of shameful weaknesses that are caused by man himself, and only he is .responsible for eliminating them

There are three situations in which the powers and weaknesses of human beings :reveal themselves

Differences in potentials and talents and involuntary situations make people differ. -۱ A genius is quite different from someone who has fairly little intelligence. The former can be regarded as powerful, and the latter as weak. When a person has literary talent and taste, he can be considered as stronger than the one who does not have it. Various talents for learning, intelligence, the

power of guessing, and talent for economics, law and politics can categorize people into strong or weak. The variety and diversity in talents and characteristics is so great that some people may be strong in certain potentials and weak in other ones. In such cases, since each person has advantages that others do not possess, the members of the society must harmonize their different potentials and talents to serve everyone's .development and perfection

Sometimes the difference between the strong and the weak is used for progress - ۲ toward intelligible life, and both the strong and the weak aim for the pinnacles of intelligible life. The diversity in the potentials, talents, emotions, desires, thoughts, cultures, physical situations and social environments is so great among people that the difference between the strong and the weak can never be totally eliminated; social life, instead, should be adjusted in a way that each individual, with all of his/her .characteristics, can head toward intelligible life

Sometimes the strong and the weak compete against each other. Their - ۳ :competitions can be divided into three groups

a) Competition without conflict: The strong and the weak continue their lives without intersecting each other. They each go their own way, none taking action against the .other

b) Disturbing competition: This kind of rivalry may lead to the opponent's doom. We must say that all rivalries and competitions in the domain of purely natural life that are dominated by the self are of this second kind; the 'other than the self' is considered as

worthless, and man tries to dominate anything to his advantage if he has the power to do so, and if he does not, he will take any measures needed to get it, burning in desire all the time. Like animals, their 'natural self' knows no boundaries, ever-inflating; even worse, they always believe that the whole universe owes them everything, and

whenever they fail to achieve their desires, they think that the world has been cruelly .atrocious to them, and they should seek their revenge

c) Constructive competition: This kind of rivalry guides both sides toward perfection. Such rivalry is quite approvable, even reiterated. Many verses of the Qur'an :emphasize the importance of competing with others in good deeds

و لکل وجهه هو مولیها فاستبقوا الخیرات

And for every nation there is an end, a goal in life; so, what matters is to be ahead of" (others in good deeds." (۲: ۱۴۷

Those who do not take part in the competition of doing good, make themselves weak .and incapable at their own will

In brief, in this kind of rivalry between humans, which is of the constructive kind, the two persons do not confront front each other aiming to destroy one another; it is a serious attempt to do more good, to become more talented than the struggling men .were before

Conscience

Conscience is one of man's most significant aspects. There are two approaches to study the conscience: an internal study of oneself and others, and by means of .anthropological studies

The Definition of Conscience

:There are two types of definitions for conscience

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Some are general definitions, which take an overall look at it, without presenting any specific cases; for example, conscience means awareness about the self or one's .character

Others are specific definitions, concerning the effects of conscience, for instance, -۲
.facts like bring a compass of the character or supervisory role conscience

A Scientific and Philosophical Study of Conscience

The conscience can be studied from two points of view. One viewpoint is based on the scientifically observable effects of the conscience, and the other explores its roots philosophically. Due to the following three factors, we are obliged to select the :philosophical study

a) The conscience has no physical entity. No dimension of time or place can be .specified for it

b) It has opposite aspects that can never be collected in any physical form. For .instance, the conscience can both torture and be tortured

c) Internal freedom, one of the most original aspects of conscience, cannot be .interpreted with any scientific principle

The Criticism on the Originality of the Conscience

Several reasons have been posed against the existence of conscience. Let us criticize :them

The function of the conscience is not general: Some believe that if the conscience -۱ were universally original – in other words, if all human beings possessed it – why does it not show in all of them? Could anyone imagine someone like Genghis Khan having a ?conscience

We must respond by saying that there are many instincts in humans about which people are highly diverse in possessing, using and fulfilling, such as the sexual instinct, emotions, curiosity and lots of others. Even the absence of some non-instinctive mental

activities or a spiritual phenomenon cannot imply that an individual is basically devoid .of it

Differences in the functions of the conscience in human beings: Some say that if the -۲ conscience is to be original, why is there so much diversity among people in its functions? Various functions for the conscience cannot defy its existence, as the existence of brutally savage human beings cannot prove that there is no conscience; the furthest we can go is to say that conscience is a relative phenomenon, prone to variation in its intensity, which varies from one person to another. If people use their conscience in various intensities, it should lead to the conclusion that they do not have a conscience at all, as diversities people have in their usage of their mental powers .cannot imply that they have no intelligence

If the conscience is original, why is there so much debate and dispute over it among -۳ thinkers? We must counter argue by pointing out that thinkers are in debate and dispute over a great many things, and conscience is merely one of them. Do philosophers not disagree over matter and its identity? Is there absolute agreement over motion and time? If thinkers are in debate over issues like matter, motion and .time, it does not defy them, as is the case about conscience

The function of the conscience is not compatible with that of intelligence and - ۴ reason: Some claim that the conscience does not function compatibly with intelligence and reason; the former

is highly concerned about the good and evil of actions, whereas the latter is not at all. Moral conscience can identify gratitude and thankfulness, and intelligence can study it. There is no conflict between reason and conscience, despite the occasional differences seen between some principles of moral conscience and some schools of thought. For instance, moral conscience decrees that be fair and just, but hedonism believes that a person should enjoy himself, going after his desires. This is definitely not a conflict between the methods of moral conscience and those of intelligence and reason; it is a difference between the principles of moral conscience and the views in

.various schools of thought

Is conscience created by the society? Some sociologists believe that conscience is -۵ an outcome of man's social life, and has no identity of its own. We must say that human societies are not capable of creating new phenomena in man; the most they can do is to give them a touch of color. Can the society make its members discover the unknown without thinking? Can a society make all of its members mathematicians? Can we have a society in which people's desires are controlled in such a way that ?everyone follows a moderate, balanced way of life

Man is a being possessing a great many potentials, and high flexibility. Human societies can merely determine how the potentials are put to use. In brief, if this means that social and environmental laws and factors are generally influential in coloring the

conscience, it is a highly proper point, confirmed by our scientific and sensory observations. It does not mean, however, that the conscience is totally a consequence of the society and environmental factors. We also admit that social and environmental factors may affect the conscience, but it does not mean that the .conscience is made by the society, even if it is done by an internal flexibility

The conscience starts functioning from childhood: Freud believes that the - ۶ conscience is based and founded by the dos and don'ts engraved in the human mind in childhood. Since a child obeys his/her parents, he believes, and the parents continually order him to do or not do certain things to protect him, a phenomenon .called moral conscience is gradually formed in the child

If commands and preventions can lead to moral conscience, the same thing should happen in animals, which is not true. Freud may argue that it is only man who can develop a conscience through intrigue and forbiddance, whereas we must accept that man has an internal characteristic that allows him to develop conscience when .encountering certain motives

There are no fixed principles concerning conscience: Some believe that it is - ۷ impossible to set fixed principles for the conscience, for it is a personal, variable phenomenon. Our response is that each mental or spiritual phenomenon arising in man is accompanied with certain personal factors. Yet, all phenomena follow their own

set of laws. When phenomena like recall, will, or decision-making arise in man, they are accompanied with the individual's certain characteristics – thus, it is .characterized, and does not defy its orderly nature

Moral conscience cannot be fixed, for man's moods and mental states vary: Since -۸ human mental states are always changing, moral conscience also undergoes continual change, and no fixed phenomenon can be associated with it. Some people are extremely conscientious in some cases, and at other times totally put their conscience aside. Thus, how could we ever consider moral conscience as being a fixed phenomenon? We must say that we should consider the difference between conscience – or any phenomenon – and an activity done under certain circumstances. Conscience itself is a fixed phenomenon, but its activities depend on a variety of factors. Do we use our intelligence and reason equally at all times? If we do not, does ?that defy its existence

Conscience and man's tendency toward machinery: Some say that despite all the - ۹ value and significance moral conscience has, there is no need to continue discussing it now that technology has begun to dominate man. Nowadays, man does not need an internal factor, or a built-in judge to distinguish good from bad. Our response is that having accepted the necessity of conscience for man's emancipation, we must take its advice in the technology-infatuated world we are living in. If people realize its significance, they will take fundamental steps toward its revival. Even now, people are still

.deeply moved when they learn about sacrificial actions made by other human beings

The Importance of Conscience

As Bertrand Russell says, “Man has never needed his conscience as crucially as he does today.” That is how necessary conscience is. Let us also quote from Tolstoy: “Whoever claims that human life can be managed merely by means of intelligence ”.and reason has in fact defied the very possibility of life

Using the conscience can remove the diversities and differences between humans. The most important factor in harmonizing and uniting the people and classes of a society is the conscience. It is the strongest builder of justice. Conscience can prevent atrocities, oppression, and harness man's desire for fame. It can present man with .ideals, which are vital if man is to bring his desires and wishes under control

The Characteristics and Consequences of Conscience

:The most important characteristics and consequences of conscience are

۱- Conscience is where memories are kept. If so memories about pleasant, shameful, .embarrassing, good and bad events cannot be insignificant to man's character

۲- .There are various levels for conscience

۳- .Conscience and reason can be harmonious

۴- Conscience understands the basic principles that reason follows, such as: The .whole is larger than its parts, reality exists, and man should act reasonably

۵- .The functions of the conscience are also reflected on other human beings

۶- .Man's character develops along with the development of his conscience

۷- .Conscience is man's safest guide

۸- .The conscience can become ugly and vulgar, a burden on man's existence

۹- The conscience can be tortured.

۱۰- The conscience can suffer from great anxiety and

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worry.

۱۱- The conscience can be held responsible.

۱۲- The conscience can differentiate good from evil.

۱۳- The conscience can supervise.

۱۴- The conscience can suffer from upsets and fits.

۱۵- The conscience can decree.

۱۶- The conscience can find serenity.

۱۷ -The certainty of the conscience is much greater than that of reason and intelligence.

۱۸- The conscience can set up trials.

۱۹- The conscience can scold and reprimand.

۲۰- The conscience is capable of judgment.

۲۱- The conscience can be entrapped or freed.

۲۲- The conscience executes the law.

۲۳- The moderate conscience shows facts without manipulation.

۲۴- The conscience reminds human beings about the necessity of sympathy.

۲۵- The conscience is where man can privately confer with himself.

.The conscience can speak with man's reason and intelligence -۲۶

.The conscience can be deceived -۲۷

.The conscience can be disabled -۲۸

.The conscience can be put to the test -۲۹

.The conscience can weaken and strengthen -۳۰

.Man's internal freedom arises from his conscience -۳۱

.The conscience reflects God's words -۳۲

.The conscience feels that man's "self" is immortal -۳۳

.The conscience has conflicting waves -۳۴

.The conscience reminds man about the objectiveness of creation -۳۵

The Relationship between Recognizing Oneself and Recognizing God

,The Holy Prophet of Islam has said

من عرف نفسه فقد عرفه ربه

".Know yourself, and you will know your God"

:Let us study ۲۰ significant points on the above hadith

The human nature is abstract – it is not a physical entity. God is also far beyond -۱ .materiality and all of its attributes

God possesses true unity, and so does the human nature, which is in charge of -۲ .man's internal and external components

Although the human nature is related -۳

with the human body, it manages all of the body organs, natural instincts, forces and .potentials

The Almighty God, though connected to the universe, is far superior to space or -۴ .time; the human nature is also superior to the human body organs in regard to time

God is virtually united, but also has many innate characteristics that do not conflict -۵ .with the divine unity

God has created the universe out of complete nothingness; there was no sign or -۶ history of it before whatsoever – without any matter previously. The human nature .does the same with its imaginations, analyses and discoveries

God is aware of both the unchangeable and the variable; however, his awareness -۷ about the variable does not cause his knowledge to multiply. Likewise, knowledge .created by pertinence to the variable does not lead to change

God and the human nature are both doers equipped with free will. There are some -۸ .differences, however, between divine and human free will

God knows all generalities and details, and this knowledge of the details does not -۹ affect God's divine nature. The human nature, also capable of awareness about .details, does not change by intuitive knowledge, either

God is dominant over all components and events in the universe, and He -۱۰ .dominates all components of the universe equally

We can recognize the principle that God exists and has glory and beauty; -۱۱ however, we are unable to comprehend God's divine nature, for our tools of recognition do not have the capability to dominate the nature of

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divinity. In the same way, the sacred nature of man is not identifiable either; we can .only identify man's principles of existence and his characteristics

God has affection for all of His creations, especially mankind. This affection does -۱۲ not rise out of instinctive factors or seeking benefit. The human nature is also capable of being affectionate to man's inventions and creations, and can develop his affection .to be free of any motives of advantage-seeking or instinctive factors

God loves beauty and perfection, and although He infinitely possesses beauty and -۱۳ greatness, He wants His creations to possess them too. Regardless of all social and cultural factors, the human nature also has a tendency for beauty and perfection; seeking beauty and perfection can be considered as some of the most important of .man's nature

Whatever God creates, God's divine nature remains unchanged; in other words, -۱۴ God's creations are not parts of a whole, which break away from it when created. Likewise, the human nature can create billions of ideas, imaginations, decisions and .deeds, but none of them affect it

The Almighty God is constantly active, and all of the changes and developments in -۱۵ .the universe eventually refer to God's continual activity

God created the universe without intending to gain any advantages. The human -۱۶ nature can also fulfill its duties without expecting any benefit in return. By purifying his soul, man can learn to do things for their own sake, not for a reward or escaping .punishment

We can never interpret the universe -۱۷

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.reasonably unless we accept God and the fact that the universe depends on God

Since God has absolute knowledge and control over the universe, His patience is -۱۸ .endless. The human nature has some of that patience, too

By means of intuitive knowledge, God is aware of His nature and characteristics. -۱۹ .The human nature is also capable of gaining such knowledge

The universe cannot limit God – in other words, the creatures in the universe - ۲۰ cannot occupy space or locations where God is absent. The human nature is also so .dominant over the human body that nobody organ can never be limited or denied

Man's Four Relationships

:Four relationships can be associated with man

Man-Himself: Man has self-consciousness, and is able to change and evolve - ۱ himself. It is this self-consciousness that has led to various branches in psychology. If man were not aware about himself, he could never know about the psychological :effects of others. There a few laws that govern man's relationship with himself

High awareness of the fact that man is a part of the objective universe: Man must increase his knowledge of all of his physical and spiritual aspects, and remove any dark points about his existence. He should make the most of what he knows about himself. The fact that man's life is a part of the harmony of the universe is highly significant. If man reaches a level of awareness where he considers himself a part of :the universe, he will find these qualities

- .He will not stupefy himself
-

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.He will avoid deceits that are destructive to his soul

- .Greed, boastfulness and arrogance will leave him
- .He will be able to use and enjoy beauties
- .Destructive rivalries and conflicts will be replaced by constructive competition
- .Man will achieve spiritual expansion
- .He will be able to assess means and ends correctly

- .He will interpret power accurately
- .Human societies will become a united family
- Man will endeavor to spiritually develop and increase the knowledge of his fellow .beings

The necessity of accepting self-possession : Man must put sincerity into his .relationship with his own self, and accept the truth

Self-deceit is the worst way man can betray himself. If man does not accept reality, .he will be betraying himself

Maximum use of man's positive, constructive potentials: With self-awareness, man will never destroy his own positive potentials. He will not use his potentials in order to destroy other human beings; he will use them for his own spiritual development and .serving others

Affection toward others that arises out of human nature : Self-awareness makes people be kind to one another. By kindness here we mean affection rising out of sublimated emotions, not purely natural tendencies. By spiritual elevation, man sees himself in harmony with others in the universe, and thus begins to feel affection for .them

۲ - Man-The Society: Emile Durkheim has presented a rather extremist approach to man's relationship with the society. He believes that the human self is built by the society, and man has no independent

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identity regarding his social surroundings. In response, we must say that man .possesses many potentials, and the society can merely develop or inhibit them

Though the society is able to take charge of radical identities, it cannot determine the identities. Preparing the grounds for man's physical and spiritual development – or hindrance – is the farthest the society can go. In other words, Man is born with a

series of potentials, and many factors can influence them, one of which is the society and its various components. It can, however, trap man into fatalistic, unconscious factors guided by social management, which may prevent human beings from .becoming self-alienated

Man-The Universe: If man thinks he has been created as a worthless being for a -۳ certain period of time and thus has no relationship whatsoever with the universe, he has in fact begun to destroy himself. With regard to man's relationship with the :universe, he has several responsibilities

a) Man must discover the universe and the orderly harmony governing it: Man's approach to the universe must be both general and detailed. From the detailed point of view, man studies and discovers the universe by means of his senses and technical devices, whereas through his general point of view he can understand concepts and .meanings

b) Taking the rules of gravity in the universe seriously and making use of them: The universe includes many physical and spiritual laws that cannot be ignored. Cause and ,effect, and also actions and reactions are examples of such rules

.which man should use

c) The universe has a supernatural, divine aspect: The supernatural, divine aspect of the universe consists of its relationship with its creator. Understanding this aspect makes man's sense of duty and responsibility be aroused, and find a new, profound .concept for life

Man-God: Man can achieve perfection by means of his relationship with God. This is -۴ when man understands that God created him perfectly, so he should develop divine attributes in himself. If man realizes that divine perfection and greatness awaits him, .he would never keep himself busy indulging with worldly affairs

In his relationship with God, man must take God's dominance and control on him

seriously, for if man feels that his whole existence is overwhelmed by God, he will .never deviate from the path of righteousness

Spiritual Moderation

Spiritual moderation involves a harmony among man's internal potentials and the factors that activate them. The better man's potentials do their orderly duties, the more moderate man will be. Since human potentials are interrelated, the balance of man's spiritual system is a sign of the moderation of each potential. Likewise, if each .and every potential is well-balanced, the whole system is moderate, too

Spiritual moderation can also be regarded as "mental well-being." The higher man's mental well-being is, the better his spiritual moderation, too. By "mental," however, we do not refer to only formal thoughts, but man's overall mental activities, including incoming feelings, imagination, associating meanings, selecting the means and .balancing the means and the end

Spiritual moderation does not exist, or cannot

:be scientifically discovered. The reasons for this are

۱ - The infinity of man's greed for gaining advantages, whether selfish or seeking perfection: Since man knows no boundaries in expanding his "self-love" or "supreme self," there can be no true moderation for the free psyche. The endless quality of the self is due to man's supernatural aspect. The human character has two sides. On one hand he deals with what his senses reveal to him, and on the other hand he is concerned with the supernatural and moral values. The human self can infinitely advance on both sides, so we cannot imagine a real moderation between them; neither on the positive side, which pertains to the "supreme self," nor the negative .one, which involves the natural self

۲ - Man's endless flexibility: Man can vary fatalistic factors and make optional selections due to his infinite flexibility. Proper education and training, for example, can

bring about such a spiritual revolution in man that a criminal becomes a fair person, or .vice versa. This proves that true moderation is not verifiable

The Relativity of Spiritual Moderation

Man's spiritual moderation is a relative truth, for each human being has his/her own spiritual balance depending on his/her specific social, moral, legal, cultural and historical circumstances. The impurities in the spirit make it have relative balance. If the human self succeeds in harmonizing the flow of his internal potentials, there will ".be spiritual moderation in the domain of "how it is

The management of the "self" in this domain involves preserving the desired self – this

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.is the main goal of the self in managing man's existence

:The self can aim for two kinds of self-preservation in the domain of the psyche

a) Self-preservation based on fatalistic factors: Like animals, man lives only according to his natural instinct and tendencies in this state. In such people, spiritual moderation is merely the harmony between instincts and fatalistic factors. It is a pseudo-fatalistic product of the management of the self, and if the unconscious parts are put together .as a machine, they would all function harmoniously

b) Self-preservation based on the development of potentials: Some people to some extent put their potentials and powers to work. Influenced by geographical, cultural, legal, and political factors of their society, they cannot consider ideals any higher than their society offers for their "self," so they make no attempt for its advance. They go after anything they consider useful – that is, what their social circumstances offers .them

If there are sophisticated figures in such social conditions that can make people realize that they can make better use of their potentials and forces, they will have a

.chance of being guided to the path of perfection and greatness

By elevating himself from the “how it is” to the domain of “how it should be,” man can have better spiritual moderation. Man is a being that possesses the basic factor for .such a promotion; he has a built-in tendency towards the proper virtues he deserves

There are two reasons that prove that man possesses a strong internal force that

:moves him from “how it is” to “how it should be

a) The fact that many human beings throughout history have achieved extreme greatness and perfection: History shows us many prophets of God, men of wisdom and moralists that have harnessed selfishness and achieved the ultimate level man can advance to. Without such internal purification, Abraham could never have .attempted to slay his own son

b) The necessity of education and guidance: If the potential to enter the domain of “how it should be” didn't exist in man, education would never have existed; we clearly .see, however, that education has had a profound effect on human beings

The essential factor that evolves man from “how it is” to “how it should be” is his perfection-seeking, intense eagerness to expand his existence all across the whole .universe and totally dominate it

Any human being who enjoys mental well-being will be interested in such spiritual .development

The moderation man achieves through development and perfection is true moderation, and he will see every event and moment of the universe as new. As Jalal-:addin Muhammad Molawi says

تازه می گیر و کهن را می سپار که هر امسالت فزون است از سه پار

جان فشان ای آفتاب معنوی مر جهان کهنه را بنما نوی

ای جهان کهنه را تو جان نو از تن بی جان و

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دل افغان شنو

گرچه هر قرنی سخن نو آورد لیک گفت سالفان یاری کند

تا نزاید بخت تو فرزند نو خون نگردد شیر شیرین، خوش شنو

Don't let yourself get stuck in the past and the old; remember that your current year is worth more than your last three years altogether. Endeavor to elevate your character the best you can, for your efforts will refine your inside of all the old precipitated in you from nature, and refresh your soul. When your soul is refreshed, the universe before you will also be fresh and new. When man thinks about God's divine state from the very depth of his conscience and devotes his whole ego to perceiving divinity, he will completely realize that each moment of his life will be new, .and his soul will be fresh is its contact with God

Though each century brings with itself new speech and new speakers, the past also promotes it by establishing the fundamentals of human culture. Your spiritual prosperity should present the results of original truths like newborn babies, which .open their mouths and feed upon previous knowledge, thus evolving your spiritual life

In fact, Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) is inviting man to abandon this material .world, and submit himself to divine changes

Internal moderation in the domain of

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as it should be" is not possible without considering the supreme aim of life and" obeying moral values. If the human self is to develop and establish a correct relationship with the universe, it must be attracted by the ultimate aim of life and .acquire the highest of human virtues

In brief, taking into consideration the philosophy of creation and obeying divine values is absolutely crucial if spiritual moderation is to be achieved. Only then will man's internal potentials be in harmony with various factors, and result in his mental well-being and spiritual moderation.

Spiritual Expansion and Contraction

When expanding, the human spirit finds amazing qualities so amazing that one would think it has undergone complete change. Spiritual expansion cannot be defined logically, and only experiencing it can really let us understand it.

Spiritual expansion is accompanied by the feeling of absolute freedom. In other words, in such a state man feels that nothing can hold him back; he is in an unbelievably exciting state that no material emotions pertaining to nature or its aspects can fathom. When man's emotions are in harmony with his intelligence and logic, psychological expansion appears in its supreme state.

The Relativity of Spiritual Expansion

point

Human spiritual expansion can be regarded as relative from three points of view:

a) The Factors that Make It Happen: like physiological, mental, spiritual, personal, and many other factors.

b) The Fundamental Elements of Character: Since these elements vary in people, the expansion caused by encountering events varies in each person.

c) The Perfection and Imperfection of People's Characters: This is also a significant factor. The

spiritual expansion each person feels is proportionate with that person's system of character. For example, those who are drowning in their “natural self” find an

expansion when they achieve a higher position or more wealth in which they regard the whole universe as their servant. One who seeks knowledge, on the other hand, considers unsolved scientific issues as crucially vital and cannot achieve spiritual .expansion without figuring the unsolved out

The Basic Origin of Spiritual Expansion and Contraction

Spiritual expansion and contraction pertains to the goal man aims for in his life. Those who have no real aim in life experience expansions and contractions equal to the .normal joys and sorrows of everyday life

When man sets for himself a goal in life and tries to achieve it, he experiences spiritual contraction if he encounters an obstacle hindering his progress, and expansion when he successfully passes it. When one has a great end like saving the people of a society, the expansion brought about by achieving it will be an incredibly immense spiritual promotion for him. In general, whenever the human spirit moves on the path .to perfection, passing any obstacle on his way will result in expansion

Conscious and Unconscious Expansions and Contractions

:Expansions and contractions can be divided into two groups

a) Conscious, and

.b) Unconscious

Sometimes man is qualitatively and quantitatively aware of the expansions and .contractions, and sometimes he does not know anything about his spiritual state

Spiritual expansions and contractions can also be regarded as conscious or unconscious by considering their causes. In other words, sometimes man knows what causes such spiritual states, and sometimes he

.does not

When man encounters obstacles hindering his path to achieving his goal in life, and :fails to pass it, he will experience one of the following spiritual states

He may undergo mental contraction due to doubt and anxiety about achieving his - ١ goal. If such people have powerful thoughts, they will thus develop a pessimistic .ideology

He may abandon all efforts to reach his goal, and become totally indifferent. All - ٢ .values would then appear as worthless to him

Those who have experienced progress toward perfection are able to withstand external setbacks, so they do not suffer from spiritual contractions when .encountering obstacles

The Expansion and Contraction of the Divine Conscience

Spiritual expansions and contractions can never penetrate into man's God-given conscience, for spiritual expansions and contractions are due to success and failure to achieve worldly advantages. The divine conscience is, however, far superior to these mediocre states. Many human beings, alas, are so drowned in material affairs that they disable their God-given conscience and waste their life on baseless expansions .and contractions

When the divine conscience is awaken in man, all normal expansions are replaced by .supreme, divine expansions

Having achieved divine expansion of conscience, man will undergo no more :contractions, unless

.He feels a greater expansion which will make his current expansion seem meager - ١

Since man is in the natural world, he will always suffer from contractions in his - ٢ worldly affairs until he reaches God. Divine expansions do make, however, man feel .that these natural contractions are temporary and mortal

The Consequences of Expansions and Contractions

Both expansions and contractions leave certain effects. Constant contractions depress the

.soul, but frequent expansions result in spiritual joy and freedom

The Reasons Why Anthropology Has Failed

Throughout history, a great many intellectuals have attempted to study and explore man from various points of view – scientific, mystical, philosophical, moral and religious. Although the amount of research done is so great that it cannot be totally discarded as unsuccessful, many scholars admit that the human nature is by no :means discovered or revealed to them. The factors influential in its failure are

As we already know, all facts are interrelated, and not knowing one of them will - ۱ cast darkness on others, too. Man is an extremely complex being, full of countless, unsolved aspects and potentials. It is the unsolved aspects of man that has prevented the complete exploration of his nature. Incorrect interpretations of intuitive knowledge (where the recognized is the same as the recognizer) and free will (the dominance and supervision of the self over the positive and negative poles of an action) are examples that prove man's unsuccessful endeavor to generalize the laws .and principles of nature to his own case

On one hand, we have divine religions and men of wisdom and men of wisdom - ۲ stating that man is a valuable being innately full of hidden potentials; on the other hand, the history of mankind shows that many human beings have not activated their potentials, and are thus devoid of a great deal of their deserved greatness. Such a contradiction has led these scientists to believe that there must some unknown X-factor in man that

.inhibits his development and progress

This inability in man – that is, not all of his potentials being activated – cannot lead to the human nature remaining unsolved, for oppressing human potentials is not due to lack of knowledge about them, for man does not correctly put the little knowledge he already has about himself to use, either. Does man truly not know the fact that !?fighting righteousness is wrong, or does he know it and still does not stop doing it

Sometimes an incorrect point infiltrates the culture of a nation as a basic principle, -۳ which leads to incorrect interpretations of man. For instance, the culture of slavery so strongly penetrates into ancient India that even an intellectual like Aristotle accepts it .and expresses ideas confirming its originality

Analyzing and separating the human nature, which has become quite fashionable -۴ nowadays, has brought about great confusion in the humanities. Intellectuals who have studied one of man's aspects have become so obsessed with that one aspect that they have considered all of man's existence in it, thus imperfectly interpreting man. Despite its weaknesses, the analytical method does, however, have its advantages in studying and interpreting the nature of man it's incredible accuracy, whereas combination methods sometimes show superficial tendencies that prevents .correct knowledge

Expertise is definitely an essential part of scientific advance, but experts of the humanities have to beware not to allow their expertise to cause disastrous damage to .human harmony and unity

:The disadvantages of the analytical method are

First, it cuts

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off all relationships existent between realities. The fact that man's various aspects are .interrelated is totally ignored; all human facts are studied separately from each other

Secondly, it neglects the harmony in the human character; therefore when one aspect of man's nature appears to be significant to an intellectual, he – consciously or

.unconsciously – interprets man solely from that point of view

Ever since studying man by means of the purely analytical method became popular, one essentially important principle was forgotten: comparing man with at least one product of the interaction of chemical elements which has characteristics different from the separate, individual elements, in particular chemical compounds that cannot be changed back to their components. By comparing the unity and harmony existing in life and the human character with the product of a chemical compound, we see that .it has both new qualities and is irreversible

The third problem with the analytical method is that the thinker sometimes falls into the disastrous "There is nothing except this" state of mind. As some of them have :claimed in interpretation of man

- .Man has a social aspect and nothing else
- .He is an absolutist, and nothing else
- .He is a hedonist, and nothing else
- .He is merely a sexual instinct and nothing else
- .Man is nothing but a wolf
- .He is an exploring animal, and nothing else
- .Man is no more than a selfish animal
- .He is an animal seeking freedom
- .Man is an ambitious animal greedy for power, and nothing else
- Man is

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.a bargaining animal, and nothing else

Anthropology can only make logical progress when the "There is nothing else except .this" viewpoint does not exist

Since only one aspect of man is considered in the analytical method, sometimes man becomes obsessed with it, and puts all of his other aspects at its service. Furthermore, obsession toward one aspect makes man fall astray from science and research, and become intensely infatuated merely with the fascinating fame and .influence of outstanding figures of science

The Problems with Contemporary Psychology

Some western psychologists tend to interpret psychological issues by means of -۱ biological, physiological or purely natural bases. This prevents them from discovering .the human soul

Some psychologists are quite sensitive about accepting advanced human psychic -۲ faculties, and ignore them. As Freud admits, "It upsets me to bring up mystic and ".supernatural issues

One of the major faults with interpreting contemporary science is that it confines -۳ scientific thought to what experiments and observations provide. Some scientists have limited their analyses of the human psyche to what their observations provide them with. This is as devastatingly damaging as interpreting the world only by dividing it into the four elements. Taking into consideration the human soul and the endless aspects, potentials and changes it has in various circumstances, there will be no point in limiting ourselves to experimental sciences. When interpreting issues concerning the human psyche, different scientific fields should be employed, as is the case in .accounting for physical phenomena

Nowadays, psychology ignores the various activities, characteristics and aspects of -۴ ,the human soul

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or "heart." Persian literature cites ۴۲۷ different words deriving from the "heart," like

"heart-disturbed," "heart-given," "heartless," and many others. The human "heart" and conscience are so important that when intelligence, wisdom and logic fail in discovering the secret underlying an issue, man refers to his heart and nature to .prove that he is right

In contemporary psychology, a certain range has been abstracted and described -۵ for the psyche; going beyond these limits is considered as being psychologically unbalanced. In this kind of psychology, there is no difference between a rigid, stagnant soul and one that is dynamic and tries not to see an event the same at two .different moments

For instance, why do some people become fascinated in themselves, why do some others have a dynamically progressive psyche, and try to avoid self-obsession, and save themselves from nihilism? There is no distinction between a stagnant soul and a .dynamic one in this psychology; both are treated as equal

Life: The Hows and Whys

Asking about the Philosophy of Life

Asking about the philosophy of life has always existed. Many people around the world have posed the question. Basically, once any conscious human being succeeds in releasing his "self" from the ocean of anxieties, joys and tensions of his fatalistic, natural life and consider life itself, he will immediately reach the question of the philosophy of life. Without a correct interpretation of life, man will fall into nihilism; this became quite intense ever since machines dominated life increasingly in the ۱۸th century, making people shout about the emptiness they feel in

.their lives

In order to understand nihilistic feelings, we must first consider the mental :characteristics of a nihilistic person

A nihilist does not regard life as a necessary issue. He hates life rather than -۱

.enjoying it

For nihilists, the facts, principles and relationships of life undergo dramatic change. -۲ .Beauty and ugliness are meaningless, orderliness becomes a mere hallucination

A nihilist's soul is influenced quite quickly and easily, sometimes even taking his -۳ :consciousness away. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) says

میگریزند از خودی در بیخودی یا به مستی یا به شغل ای مهتدی

With the occupation or infatuation they acquire, they are fleeing from self-consciousness toward unconsciousness, but they do not know that they will be pulled back into their natural, physical self by the chains of their desires and whims, for their .escape was not upon God's command

Values are worthless in the eyes of a nihilist; greatness and degradation are no -۴ .different to him

The first two groups basically do not ask about the philosophy of life at all. The first group, who cannot abstract life from themselves, are unable to consider the phenomenon of life. The second group, although developed people, regard life as a part of the whole universe, heading for the aim of creation. The second group are .quite joyous people

به جهان خرّم از آنم که جهان خرّم از اوست عاشقم بر همه عالم که همه عالم از اوست

I love this world because God has created it. The

.beauty of the world comes from God

Sa'adi

Motives for Asking about the Aim of Life

The various motives for seeking the aim of life can be thus categorized into these four

:groups

Negative aspects of life: Human life tends to dynamically develop, and if its -۱ movement and progress becomes stagnant, the questions arises – what is the philosophy of life? The negative aspect of asking about the philosophy of life is quite a despaired, hopeless one. However, not all people are influenced by negative motives; some people, when facing those stagnant, miserable beings, believe that if such people cannot realize the true taste of life, others can do so very well. Some people have a nihilistic philosophy for themselves, while others endeavor to overcome the .factors that inhibit the dynamic progress of life

Positive aspects of life: Those who live a purely natural life and are satisfied with it -۲ will sooner or later realize that they have lost their true self, and become captive to something artificial and unreal. They cannot present themselves with the true form of life in order to search for its philosophy. Even if they start inquiring about the aim of .life, their questions will not be real ones

Secondary, consequential aspects of life: Sometimes man sets for himself some -۳ ideals and interprets life on their basis. When he fails to achieve his ideals, life will seem worthless to him, and he begins to question the philosophy of life. For instance, some people who go after science, at first think science is the absolute aim

of life; when they fail, they hopelessly turn nihilistic. Some others turn to despair when they cannot achieve wealth and luxury. Such people cannot find the correct answers, .for they do not ask the correct questions

Neutral aspects: feeling the necessity of a general viewpoint of life: If man is to ask -۴ questions about something, the subject matter must be outside his human nature; he .should look at it from a superior point of view

We must keep in mind that asking about the aim of life never includes asking about the means and levels of life, for each part of life has its own philosophy; thus, any

thinker exploring the philosophy of life should not consider all components of life. The .human ego should rise higher than natural life to be able to question it

This is when the human ego does not search for the philosophy of life in purely natural life anymore. Unless one reaches the highest levels of the human self, distinguishing the aim of life from its shadow will not be possible. One cannot deserve to ask about the philosophy of life without stepping beyond his normal life, which is riddled with .material things and feelings

The Necessity of Recognizing the Ultimate Aim of Life

We can present several reasons why it is necessary to recognize the ultimate aim of :life

۱- Many schools of thought throughout history have attempted to seek and present the aim of life. They regard goals merely higher than the petty goals of life as the ultimate end of life. If the

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relative goals in natural life really could provide the ultimate goal of life, there would .be no more need for research on the philosophy of life

۲- As man's knowledge and dominance over his life increases, it has been proven that man's true life is meaningless without choosing higher aims for life. Without an .intelligible aim, human life will lose all its value and significance

۳- If the universe and the phenomenon called life have no aim, life will have no :meaning at all. As Nasser Khusro, the renowned Iranian poet says

روزگار و چرخ و انجم سر به سر بازیستی گر نه این روز دراز دهر را فرداستی

All this world and stars are not all of what there is; someday, all this will come to an .end

Various Viewpoints on the Aim of Life

There are many different schools of thought on what the aim of life is. Let us study :some of them further

Personal goals: Some people consider what they desire, like money, power, science -۱ .and maybe even serving people as their main aim in life

.Power: Some intellectuals, like Nietzsche, believe power to be the main aim of life -۲

Making the best choice: Some people, like Nero, Genghis Khan, Alexander and the -۳ .pharaohs, are regarded as the best choice in natural life schools of thought

Hedonism: Hedonists believe that saturating one's need for pleasure is the main -۴ aim of life. They have mistaken the interpretation of the mechanism of purely natural .life for the main aim of life

Comfort and luxury: Some -۵

schools of thought see the main aim of life in having luxury and comfort. “Can anyone accept the logic that you should lose your life today, so that a living human being in future may have a comfortable life? Now that life today is not any less comfortable than the future, why should it be sacrificed? Furthermore, those human beings whom history remembers as distinguished and aware, did not even consider their own comfort as their aim of life; how can they consider the comfort of beings like ?themselves in future as their aim of life

Man: Some schools of thought believe that man is the aim of life. Moral ethics, -۶ avoiding disturbing others, activating human emotions and respect toward others are the main principles of this belief. The problem with it, however, is that it provides no logical grounds for man to give up his greed, and learn how to sacrifice his own wishes .'for the sake of others

Abstracting the soul from material interests: Some Indian religions consider the aim -۷ of life as purifying the soul from all desires, whims and wishes. Although this belief

reinforces one aspect of the soul, it ignores the others, which are activated by .establishing a correct relationship between man and the universe

The climax of this aim of life is when the abstraction-seeker considers himself as God, claiming that there is nothing in him but God. After quite convincing study and thoughts that satisfy my conscience, I have come to the conclusion

that these Indians, having reached an extremely delicate view of the universe, where they are able to see the universe as a unit for their own perception, make a very strange mistake – instead of realizing how great their soul is, they make God seem smaller! We can say, however, that if the human soul makes such mistakes in these .delicate states, their soul truly has made no progress at all

Nirvana: Presented by Buddha, this belief is said to be achieved by abstracting the -۸ soul away from material and physical pleasures. Nirvana ignores man's talents and potentials, making the human ego fall astray from its true path. In other words, it .omits some facts about man

Absolute freedom: Here, being released from any form of confinement or limitation -۹ is considered as the aim of life. Simpletons who follow such a belief have not understood the meaning of freedom correctly, for freedom is a means, not an end. Freedom is the power to choose, and if accompanied by proper thought and choice, can elevate man. Since freedom arises from the dynamism of life, it cannot even be .the partial aim of life, let alone the main one

The ultimate aim of life in divine religions: Life, as seen in divine religions, is an -۱۰ outstanding effect of God's will. Thus, the aim of life is to reach God. The Holy Qur’an .has also expressed the aim of life in various ways

The Aim of Life as Seen in the Holy Qur’an

The verses in the Holy Qur’an that concern the aim and

:philosophy of life can be categorized into ten groups

(Verses saying that creation is not aimless. (۳:۱۹۱ -۱

(Verses implying the objective righteousness of the universe. (۶:۷۳ -۲

(Verses that show that life has an aim. (۲۳:۱۱۵ -۳

Verses that state that the universe has not been created as a means for - ۴ (playfulness or amusement. (۲۱:۱۶

(Verses that believe God is the final destination of everything.(۴۱:۵۳ -۵

(Verses that say man will return back to God. (۳:۱۰۹ -۶

Verses that say those who do good will go to heaven and evildoers will end up in -۷ (hell. (Counsel, ۴۱:۲۲) and (۴:۱۴۰

(Verses that regard the end of life as meeting God. (۱۸:۱۱۰ -۸

Verses that call drowning in purely natural phenomena as "worldly life," and - ۹ (denounce such a life. (۴۷:۳۶

Verses that state worship as the aim of life, encouraging man to be pious and - ۱۰ (pure. (۵۱:۵۶

:Studying these verses leads us to some conclusions

a) The creation of the universe has not been in vain. We can conclude this principle by studying the external world and the order and harmony ruling it, and also by studying .the internal world

Ever since mental development begins, a kind of original perception occurs inside us that contends with the playful manipulations, hallucinations and imaginations about the universe. This battle, like the battle between the conscience and evil, goes on until

it wins and shows man the ultimate aim of the world, or it loses, sending

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.man off to a nihilistic place to hang about

b) The universe is orderly and righteous; nothing in the universe moves outside the .realm of values and proper merits

c) The universe is not a plaything; it is quite serious in its creation. By understanding .the mathematical face of the universe, we can realize how serious it is

d) The universe is moving toward its final destination. Such a destination cannot be lower than the stages it passes through, and it cannot be equal to them either. The .final destination of all movements and developments is God

e) The law of actions dominates the universe. All of man's movements, developments, .words, thoughts and actions lead to reactions in this world and the other world

f) The aim of life is much higher than purely natural life. The supreme aim of life cannot be of the same kind as the advantages of natural life, for the benefits and desires natural life provides belong to natural life, which cannot be regarded as the real aim of life itself. Thus, the ultimate aim of life must be beyond the conditions of .purely natural life

g) The principle of reward and punishment shows that each human being will receive .the rewards or punishment he should get with the aims he has set himself in his life

h) The final aim of human life is the success of man's supreme nature in life, which begins from God and returns to God through worship. Worship means accomplishing the nature of life in its

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various aspects. Once man steps beyond his purely natural life, his worshiping will begin. If man understands himself as a part of the general rhythm of the universe,

who must make efforts to activate the disposition of his existence, he will turn to worship. Thus, all aspects of man's life can be regarded as worship, and as Imam Ali .says, the whole world can become man's mosque

Therefore, a university student, a farmer working on his farm, and a worker busy in his workplace are all worshiping God, provided that they consciously move along the :path toward God. The ultimate aim of life as Islam sees it is

The ultimate aim of life is making the ideals of this passing life with the waters of intellectual-spiritual principles and freely guiding the human character – which has arisen from earth – toward divine attraction, freeing it from natural factors and selfishness by means of awareness of pure soul, which is connected to the general .rhythm of the universe

A life with an aim is a conscious effort; every moment of the observable aspect of such a life is the preliminary to the next, evolutionary moment in a transparent world upon which divine light shines on man's pure conscience, and its deep aspect is drops pouring into the ocean of eternity, elevating the human character with its waves all :the way to God." That is a life with an aim – intelligible life, which means

انّ صلوتی و نسکی و محیای و مماتی لله

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رب العالمین

My prayers, worship and death are at the will of God, the Creator of the universe."“ ((۶:۱۶۲

The Characteristics of an Objective Life

:If man sets himself an ultimate goal in life and aims for it, his life will find new qualities

۱- Realizing the value of life and not feeling emptiness: If man considers the aim of his life as worshiping God, he will believe that every moment of his life belongs to God. Such a human being will not only understand the value of life, but also never feel

.nihilistic, even if his wishes or dreams do not ever come true

Supreme responsibility; knowing where one stands in the universe: In an objective -۲ life, man both understands where he stands in the universe and also feels the .necessity to move along the path of evolution

Respecting one's own and others' nature: When there is an aim in life, man - ۳ considers his nature as valuable, and also feels respect for the value of other human beings' nature, for he understands the unity among human beings in the talent to find .God and move toward the highest goal of life

Appreciating God's blessings: In objective life, man gains every benefit he gains – -۴ from science

Reasonably adjusting the relationship between the means and the end: In - ۵ objective life, man does not make use of any illogical means for reaching his goal; he considers the logical relationship between the means and the goal, and chooses his .goal by means of correct assessment of the means he uses

Deep -۶

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passion for work and activity: Since achieving the aim of life is impossible without moving along the path of divine attraction, serious work and effort is a crucial :fundamental man with an objective life. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi says

دوست دارد یار این آشفتگی کوشش بیهوده به از خفتگی

اندرین ره میتراش و میخراش تا دم آخر دمی فارغ مباش

All this anxiety and effort – however it may be – is appreciated and approved of by God. He likes desperation and anxiety, and creates challenges and situations of hard effort for us so that we do not fall into sleep in this world. O people! Struggle, .endeavor and carve yourself a life out of this rough path, and never cease trying

Gaining supreme freedom: In an objective life, man's lusts and desires are -٧ harnessed in order to achieve supreme freedom

Life with supreme freedom is one of the characteristics of an elevated, objective life. Without such a freedom, which consists of man's release from selfishness, hallucinations and even other kinds of freedom gained for the natural flow of man's life, like social freedom and freedom of expressing one's ideas, we will have no logical .response to the question of the meaning of life

Freeing man from petty absolutism: The human mind always tends to aspire for -٨ absolutism, so man must always consider the supreme aim of life as the absolute, so that other affairs and things will

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.seem to him merely as a means to achieve it

:The Six Kinds of Life

A life with no consciousness, freedom, free will or independency of character: In -١ this form of life, only things that are necessary for survival are of concern, like reproduction and resisting the adversities of nature. Man thinks about neither the meaning of life nor material life. Such people have no self-independence; they purely .obey natural factors

A worldly life purely for the world: Material life is sought and nothing else. These -٢ people do observe some of the laws about nature, and do not consider it as total farce, however. But they are content with their material life, and ignore higher aspirations. They are ignorant toward their standing in the universe, and do not tend to find answers to basic questions like: Where have I come from? Where do I go from ?here? Why am I here

A spiritual life to provide spiritual delicacy (living purely for the other world) In this -٣ form of life, one spends his whole time struggling against his desires and natural emotions keeping them silent in order to purify his soul. Some ascetics believe that

.the highest aim of life is activating the delicate aspects of the soul

A life aiming for both this and the other world (a life of two independent goals) In - ۴ this lifestyle, attention is paid to both worlds. However, these people see no relation between this world and the other. They do not realize that man's life is an inseparable ,reality

despite its numerous aspects. They neglect the unity between life in this world and in .the other

A spiritual-looking life aiming for material life (pretending to aim for the other world, -۵ but actually aiming for this one) Those who have chosen this kind of life are incapable of understanding the truth about life, and merely pretend to know it. They ignore the fact that being pretentious will only fool the simple-minded, and even that for a short time. These people have actually tricked themselves, living a life of gradual spiritual .suicide. They look quite like a saint, but are evil inside

Living in this world on a path to life in the other (an intelligible life) This is the - ۶ lifestyle prophets of God have approved of. They believed that life is a truly great reality, and that proper, pious knowledge and deeds are needed like two wings that can fly man toward evolution, guiding his worldly life toward a life in the other world. Man should make use of this world only to develop; however, the heart and soul of all of man's worldly activities relate to the other world. This form of life – worldly in appearance but in fact aiming for the other world – will never make man feel nihilistic, .and its many problems are easily tolerable for man

Education: The Basics

point

:The four principles of education are

Principle ۱: The Fundamentals of Education

point

Here we are concerned with the basic principles and goals of education which we can :divide into two groups

Fixed fundamentals -۱

Changing -۲

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fundamentals

The fixed fundamentals include the principles and rules which do not change because .man's basic needs and talents always exist

The changing fundamentals, however, refer to the principles that vary with the .subject material and circumstances

:Our study of the fundamentals of education will involve two parts

.Absolute and relative goals that include the extent and limits of education -۱

.The principles that provide the essential basis of education -۲

The Goals and Duties of Education

:The goals of education are

Moderating man's raw feelings, animal instincts and correcting wrong ideas that -۱ .may govern his mind

Inducing and making acceptable the highest of human ideals, realities and values -۲ for the human being educated. It is obvious that this goal cannot become a reality unless the former goal is achieved, for without raw feelings having been moderated and the necessary mental corrections made, man will never accept the highest of .human ideals

Interpreting for man what power is and how it is to be put to use. This is not -۳ possible unless man learns to wish for others also what he considers desirable for .himself

Creating a friendly relationship between man and himself: in many societies today, -۴ the internal cries of consciences are ignored and thoughts and ideas have fallen astray, distorting man's highest emotions, too – the sole way out is to turn back and .make up with ourselves again

The Basics of Education

There are a series of intelligible principles concerning education, which if properly followed, can lead to knowledge that is longer-lasting and more profound. For instance, when one accepts the necessity of honesty

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due to correct upbringing– realizing that honesty strengthens his character– his knowledge of honesty will be much deeper and stronger. Some of the principles of :education are

The most important thing about education is realizing its necessity. Each human -۱ being must attempt to gain knowledge, and adapt himself to be able to do that. Being lazy or inconsiderate about education will destroy man's constructive talents and powers. Man must remember that education is the rule of man's life and how to live it. Education helps him make the distinction between right and wrong, good and bad. If man admits the crucial role education plays in creating a life based on righteousness, .he will definitely go after it

The human soul, like the universe, has rules and laws, ignoring which will cause -۲ .disorders in man's soul

.Education must convey the supreme aim of life to man -۳

.Education is a gradual process; individuals cannot be educated in a hurry -۴

Unconditional promises are not possible in education; teachers must keep in mind -۵ that they are dealing with delicate, sensitive mental rules, and the least slip may .totally neutralize all educational efforts

Education requires discipline and effort, on behalf of both the teacher and the -۶ student. Effort and discipline are both necessary, because education is a serious matter. The more crucial a fact is considered, the more serious it will become, and the more serious something is regarded, the more firmly one will try to gain all the .knowledge about it

Man's perfectionist ego -۷

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must be considered in education. The perfectionist ego considers the highest of human values, ideals and goals; here, since man does not only see himself, he will not .consider himself as the ideal of all things, either

Education can make man aware of his inventive creative potentials. It can help his -۸ creative talents flourish. Unfortunately, despite the current advances in the humanities, the rules of activating talents remain unclear. Thus, the kind of education .that can activate creativities and geniuses is still not available to man

- The differences between the characters of various individuals should be taken into consideration in education. Although there are educational principles and fixed fundamentals that are applicable to all people, educating some certain individuals also calls for special strategies. In other words, it is necessary to consider each individual's .character and qualities, and then devise the necessary methods of education

- The trainee should also always try to reinforce his modes of reception. Man should consider himself in need of facts and truths to elevate and develop his character throughout his whole life. In youth, however, the ability to receive facts and truths should be strengthened. As Maxim Gorky says, “A good teacher should be a good ”.student

Respect for character is quite a sensitive issue in education. The character of the • trainee – or student – must be accurately evaluated so the appropriate behavior .needed with regard to the trainee can be determined

If the character

of the trainee does not have the capacity to accept the advantage you wish to present him with, the value of the advantage will be tarnished in his view, and it may harm him too, so the extremely popular fact today – "Always respect the individual being educated" – calls for reconsideration. If the individual's character is in a way that respect would make him selfish, we will be actually betraying him, not giving him an .advantage

.It is vitally essential that values are not to be sacrificed for achieving goals -۹

Human life is valuable, provided that it does not violate the principles of other -۱۰ human lives. The life of each human being "depends upon rays of divine light; serving other people is equal to worshipping God, and harming human lives is deviation from ".the right path

There is a reaction to every action. "We must accept the fact that if we present an -۱۱ individual or the society with a bunch of flowers with purely good intentions, a bunch of flowers will definitely be given to us in return, directly or indirectly. If this fact is considered as a part of human education, man's mental revolution will begin, and we ".can claim to have stepped beyond natural history and entered human history

Both the trainer and trainee should accept that no results will be achieved without -۱۲ .hard work

Only an original effort will prevail; subsidiary, unneeded ones will fade away. What -۱۳ .remains is what is to people's benefit

Both the -۱۴

.educator and the educated must avoid being cruel or undergoing cruelty

.Not taking the principles of education seriously leads to nihilism -۱۵

Principle ۲: The Teacher and the Trainer

God is man's first teacher and trainer. He has also sent His prophets to educate man. The fact that the word "rabb" (meaning lord, creator, nurturer and trainer) has been frequently mentioned in the Qur'an shows that God is man's teacher and trainer. On one hand, God has given man the potential to gain science and knowledge and reach .perfection, and on the other hand He has sent prophets to educate and purify man

:We must keep in mind that man has three forms of teachers and trainers

One: Some teachers merely take into account man's mechanical aspect, considering man as tools and devices needed by those in power. Such teachers dry out all feelings .of freedom in their students or trainees, and inhibit their development

Two: Some other teachers and trainers consider themselves as facing a group of people influenced by their own specific social circumstances; they do not care that man can be improved. Such teachers believe that their students are creatures with certain needs, which if fulfilled, the students can have a satisfactory life. Man's evolution is of no importance here. Alas, most teachers in today's societies believe in .only this kind of education

Three: Some teachers and trainers believe that their students have both mechanical aspects and spiritual aspects – the human soul. They try to activate man's hidden talents and potentials, which are like seeds planted inside the human

:nature. There are certain conditions to qualify as such a teacher

a) The teacher or trainer must have what he wants to teach. He must know what he is

to teach the students/trainees, and how human character develops. The teacher must .not act without knowledge

b) The teacher or trainer must be committed and devoted. He must realize that .sooner or later, he will see his efforts produce results

این جهان کوه است و فعل ما ندا سوی ما آید نداها را صدا

This world is like a mountain, and whatever we do is like shouting; they are reflected .back to us

(Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi

a) The teacher or trainer must believe in the job. Education is impossible unless the .teacher believes in the facts he is to present with eagerness, love and faith

b) He should realize that his observable manners and actions are even more important than his words. His external behavior shows that, first of all, he believes in what he is doing. Secondly, the materialization of an action requires certain conditions that words do not have. It is when the teacher actually does things that it is revealed how he has conquered the barriers and left them behind. Thirdly, words are the means and actions are the end. By carrying out what he says, the teacher shows that .actions are of crucial value

Seeing the teacher or trainer actually do something and proceed with it, shows how much that action is to be done. The student

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realizes that his teacher would never spend his time and energy on that action .without having knowledge about it

c) The teacher should continue his endeavors to develop himself. Teachers and trainers must always consider themselves in need of education. "The best teacher is always the best student himself." As God as said to the Holy Prophet Muhammad :

قل رب زدنی علما

(Say 'God, increase my knowledge."(۲۰:۱۱۴"

In our daily prayers, we ask God ten times a day to guide us to the right path, which reiterates how crucial this point is.

d) Love and devotion toward the completion and development of the student or trainee: If the teacher has no other motive to teach besides making his living, or showing off, he will never be able to develop anyone. Many of the great figures of history have had teachers who were devoted and committed to their jobs.

e) Asking God for help: The teacher – or trainer – should always depend on God, and ask Him for help. In education, we must ask God to help us succeed, for here, we are dealing with the development of the character of a human being. We want to change a heap of flesh, blood and bone into a Plato, a Socrates, a Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi. Also, education is one of God's actions, so we must ask Him to allow us to deserve to be his representative in doing so.

By asking God for help, here we mean that people are very diverse – despite the

great many points mankind has in common – thus, meeting the quota in education may mean having one teacher for each student. When we are facing a person who, though having many things in common with everyone else, has specific characteristics of his own that we may not even be able to totally discover throughout a long period of several years, we will have no other way for educating him but ask God to help us.

چیست این کوزه؟ تن محصور ما و اندر آن آب حواس شور ما

ای خداوند این خم و کوزه مرا در پذیر از فضل الله اشتری

کوزه ای با پنج لوله، پنج حس پاک دار این آب را از هر نجس

تا شود زین کوزه منفذ سوی بحر تا بگیرد کوزه ما خوی بحر

O people! What does the jar of our existence contain? Salty water, which is transferred inside us through our senses, filling up our inside and making us suppose this is the best existence possible in the universe. Dear God! Accept our physical jar, for You are the Kindest, and have promised us that You have bought the faithful's .lives and possessions and given them heaven instead

The jar of our physical existence includes five pipes – in fact, five senses. These five pipes are mainly employed by our animal-like instincts, and thus tends

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to keep in itself merely mortal pleasures that leave, on the long run, nothing but bitter results. Dear God! If You bless us and safeguard the water in our jar from contaminations, our jar can penetrate into the endless world of Your Love; then, our .meager jar will be like a great sea

Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi

f) In the realm of education, the teacher must not be discouraged by the student's stubbornness, or react with anger. The educator must not behave in a way that makes the person being taught resist his lessons, for if that happens, even the best of .teachers cannot bring about the least mental development in the student

Even the shocks the teacher gives the student must be administered in a way that leaves no negative impact on the student's soul. The gentle, logical mental 'taps' that we believe to be one of the greatest factors in human education, if administered crudely and thoughtlessly, can make the soul of the student react in defense if it doesn't disable it. Not only will the student fight back, he will also take an offensive .position against the lesson

Thus, the mental shocks and reminders should be given after childhood, when mental maturity has been achieved. Also, the student must realize that the main goal is his .development and perfection, nothing else

Principle ۳: The Student and the Trainee

point

Man is quite a flexible being. All creatures in nature do not undergo much change during their lives – no mosquito changes into an eagle, and no lion becomes a

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whale – but man is capable of very dramatic change. Educators and teachers must realize that each child they face may be trained into an Abraham or Moses, or even into a Genghis Khan, a Nero, a Yazid or a Machiavelli. Thus we must have in mind the :principles of educating human beings

۱- The age of the student or trainee: Man has certain characteristics in various ages, each period calls for a different form of education. During childhood, for instance, man is intensely dependant upon his parents, and models his parents' behavior. Before mental maturity, man's character imitates others, but when man becomes able to dominate his internal existence, he will have an independent character. From youth to .middle ages, physical development wanes and powers and talents are activated

۲- The importance of the material taught: The more important man considers the content, the more he will try to learn it. What man learns toward the end of childhood and at the beginning of his youth has a deep influence on him, because during these periods what is induced as education is regarded as the most important and desirable thing. In any part of man's life, if he considers a reality as crucial, he will be deeply influenced by it. This is why teachers and trainers should always make the crucial importance of the content they teach easily understandable and acceptable for students – provided that, of course, the teachers and trainers have agreed upon it .before

۳- The necessity of compatibility

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between the ideas of the teachers and trainers and those of the trainees and students: If there is harmony between teachers and parents during the childhood or adolescence of the students, education will prove more successful. Adversity between the school and the home can lead to harmful effects on the soul. There are three :forms of harmony or disharmony between teachers and the students' parents

a) If there is complete harmony between parents and teachers, and the children are also eager to learn, education will lead to remarkable results, and create very .prosperous people

b) If parents are indifferent toward their children's education, and only expect them to become educated members of the society, the students will not become as developed as the former group, but at least they will not suffer from internal conflict and .contradiction

c) If parents disagree with the education their children are receiving, the children will suffer from mental and spiritual problems. Social leaders should do their best to present educational contents in a way that no mental or spiritual conflict is caused. Great men of wisdom, anthropologists and moralists have emphasized that the seeds of faith in God must be planted in the hearts of people so that they can reach .perfection

Taking care in how the students or trainees are transferred from the emotional - ۴ period to the intellectual period: Man's mental maturation begins with progress from crude emotions to reasoning and intellect. This gradual process has certain forms of sensitivity. The children's mental activities during this

period should be processed so that they do not feel empty and nihilistic. If those who are in the crude emotions period understand that human values are merely based upon emotions and not on reasoning, they will fall into great many problems, because they will think that any duty should make them ecstatic, or that God will grant their every wish. There are two important points that must be kept in mind during the

:period of transition from emotions to reasoning and intellect

a) The teacher/trainer must educate his students/trainees of the importance and necessity of reasoning and its role in making man's contact with facts more logical .without drying up the origins of life

b) Teachers should take great care when presenting the ways to make the transition from emotions to reasoning and intellect, for not all people can use the same methods in all conditions. For some people, explaining the errors that arise from absolute reliance on emotions and neglecting intellectual activities works more effectively. In some others, it is best to explain the advantages of reasoning with regard to facts. Other people prefer to have the reasoning methods of great figures explained to them. Still, some others are influenced by appropriate stories from which the results .of reasoning are extracted

c) Explaining emotions and reasoning should not be overdone, or one of them may be .sacrificed

Creating great interest in asking questions: In education, we must do something - ۵ that will make our students eager for discussion and reasoning instead of

mere imitators; only then will we educate scholars in different fields and majors who .are also creative

Factors Resisting Education

There are several factors that make man resist constructive, useful education – in .fact, a form of man fighting against himself

Resistance due to hereditary factors: Some scientists believe that the most - ۱ important factor that makes education fail is genetic factors. Such a theory should be criticized, for hereditary factors do not act as the ultimate causes; they do not :determine man's definite fate. The reasons for this are

a) If hereditary factors did determine man's fate, there would be no change or development in human generations; however, no generation has been identical to its .predecessors

b) The fact that children differ from their parents in appearance, behavior, and temper shows that hereditary factors are not the ultimate, conclusive factors in .determining man's behavior, physique or mentality

c) If genetics were the sole operative factor, children would have to be studied based .upon their parents' physical, mental and spiritual qualities

d) Environmental factors and favoritism among children also affect their education, so genetics cannot be the sole factor here. Considering the four reasons mentioned above, we must say that although some qualities and mental characteristics are transferred to children, they can be changed by means of educational and environmental factors, freedom and the child's hidden mental abilities; the hereditary .factors are never the final, deciding ones

If genetic factors were the determining factors in

the human character, every legal trial would include a study of the mental qualities of the parents of the accused. No one has up to now claimed that an evil person must be .the offspring of an evil parent, or vice versa

The over-intensification of some mental qualities that inhibit education: If natural -۲ mental characteristics are over-intensified, the human soul will refuse to accept any more facts. For instance, if hedonism – one of man's natural mental aspects – is reinforced inadvertently, all aspects of the human soul will be affected by it, and other characteristics will fade away. This is why we must say that mental and spiritual well-being calls for all potentials and natural characteristics to develop equally and I .balance ever since childhood

Resistance against education due to lack of character: If man has no active, fixed -۳

character, he will refuse to consider any truth as necessary or proper. Such people resist educational matters, and their resistance increases as they age. Eventually, their resistance against education will prevent them from learning about the truth and higher evolutionary development, which will only lead to irrecoverable damage and .loss

Avoiding encouragement and rewarding, superficiality and ignoring the necessity of -۴ seeking the truth: Students should be made to go after the truth, not rewards. Teachers must educate their students to follow the truth and its crucial advantages instead of merely thinking about their own physical or material life. Students must realize that if life is not adjusted based upon original

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.truths, artificial things such as money, power and fame will dominate their lives

Principle ۴: The Contents of Education

Many scholars have presented contents necessary for education. Frederic Maier has :listed these fifteen items, which are quite approvable

Intellectual thought -۱

Appreciating culture -۲

Developing creativity -۳

The importance of understanding and using science -۴

Contact with outstanding ideas -۵

Spiritual and moral values -۶

Basic skills -۷

Career efficiency -۸

Better compatibility to family life -۹

Effective satisfaction -۱۰

Physical and mental well-being -۱۱

Change of personality in order to create more interest in knowledge and- ۱۲ understanding the truth

Creating stable interests -۱۳

Creating interest in keeping peace -۱۴

Making understood that man is an ultimate criterion of the universe -۱۵

Although the above-mentioned items are general and their desirability is uncertain, the important point is presenting the criteria, principles and motives of the contents education should include. Despite the fact that intellectual thinking and reinforcing it are important parts of education, the question is how they can be developed. Cultural appreciation is significant, but what criteria show that a culture is great enough to be ?used for education

?How Do Cultures Evolve

point

Various definitions have been given for culture in encyclopedias all around the world, but they all have elements of properness, perfection, spiritual and physical progress, man's virtual dignity and glory, a deserved, appropriate life along with responsible freedom and law-abiding justice in common. Over ۱۶۴ various definitions exist. Having studied and evaluated the most important definitions of culture, we may provide a comprehensive one: Culture is the necessary or proper attribute of man's physical or mental activities, based on sound logic

.and emotions arising from sensible evolutionary lifestyles

Culture is generally a bi-polar phenomenon; it has both external and internal natures. On one hand it concerns man's mental structure and spiritual make-up – which other living beings lack – and on the other, it has observable effects, too, which are .behaviors and results physically visible

The Four Principles of Culture

:Four principles should be noted in our definition of culture

Necessary or proper quality based on sound logic and emotions arising from evolutionary lifestyles. In other words, every cultural element must first originate from sound logic and supreme human emotions, and secondly provide man with the means for his development and perfection. If what the society calls culture does not tend to develop man or arouse his highest emotions, it will be in fact an anti-culture element. Culture is a term including values. Phenomena like greed for power, fame, .selfishness and hedonism cannot be regarded as cultural elements

Human life is worthless without a culture based on the definition given above, for .without culture, life will be empty of supreme human meaning, intellect, or emotions

The more the culture of a society relies on basic, intelligible principles and supreme .human perceptions, the more lasting the culture will be

.Culture has two aspects: relative and absolute

By absolute aspect we mean the comprehensive, general aspect of culture, such as the culture of appreciating beauty, respect for others, and gaining knowledge, which is applicable to all human societies. The relative aspect of culture arises from the particular ways of thinking, emotions and behaviors of a

.certain society, like mutual respect

Two Different Forms of Culture

.We can categorize culture into two kinds: pioneer and pursuant

Pursuant culture is the quality or lifestyle independent of proven principles; it arises merely out of people's wishes and desires, right or wrong. In other words, whimsical desires are the base of this form of culture. It includes unnecessary beauties and pleasant phenomena, ignoring what people really require. Here, immoral, prolific phenomena are regarded as culture. The culture nowadays is mainly pursuant rather than pioneer. The reason for this is that a series of the highest of cultural :fundamentals have been downtrodden

۱- The culture of authentic affection for one's fellow beings

۲- The culture of finding original moral conscience

۳- The culture of having a high aim in life

۴- The culture of honesty, faithfulness and keeping promises

۵- The culture of responsible freedom, thoughts and just deeds

۶- The culture of regarding science and knowledge as sacred

۷- The culture of cooperation and collaboration

۸- The culture of spreading constructive, pioneer arts

۹- The culture of truth dominating the media and avoiding omission of facts or incorrectly interpreting them

۱۰- The culture of fine economy and providing all people of the living they are entitled .to

:Pursuant culture can be divided into three groups

- Sedentary culture: If the cultural elements of a society consist of ethnic and mental traditions, geographical conditions and qualities of the past, that culture can be considered as sedentary. In this form of culture, a series of fixed historical or

environmental characteristics infiltrate deep in the society and resist any

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.social evolution

- Liquid, colorless culture: Based on no fixed mental basis or principle, it is always .undergoing change

- Self-oriented culture: Here, cultural phenomena and activities themselves are .regarded as goals rather than means to get us to higher goals

This form of 'self-goal' was quite typical of scientific, technological and economic cultures of ۱۹th and ۲۰th century societies. It caused stillness in the real nature of culture – providing creativity and development in the ideals of life of the human ego. The other thing it has done, which is as dangerous as the former, is that instead of being the maker and manager of technology, man has become an irresponsible part .of its fatalistic trends

A Pioneer, Dynamic, Objective Culture: This kind of culture arises from the basic principles of man's evolutionary life. Its motives are original human aspects, and its goal is the ideals that make man head for the attraction of life's supreme end. This is the culture that can provide man with truly original human civilization, and free him from all selfish rulers. Cultural activities also aim toward the highest of human values. .If a culture is creative, objective and progressive, it will never fall

Pioneer culture originates from two factors – primary and secondary. The primary factor is the active, mental factor that tends to change the universe into man's ideal home by using constructive human aspects. The secondary one involves the external .and internal factors exclusive to each nation or peoples, accounting for their lifestyles

If pioneer

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culture is to dominate human societies, man should recognize the highest aim of life

.as one of the basic elements of culture

:The basic principles of pioneer culture are

The principle of perfection-seeking and eagerness toward it. Cultural truth is - ١ .eternal, even if its peoples and occurrences vary

The principle of respect, which has been called love for peers, love for mankind and -٢ .affection in human cultures

Man's high desire for a proper life -٣

:Correcting and adjusting the four relationships -۴

a) man-himself

b) man-God

c) man-the universe

d) man-his fellow beings

Two Aspects of Culture

:Every culture can have two aspects

The observable, visible aspect includes the human ideas and ideals that materialize -١ .in an observable fact, like artifacts

The clear aspect of culture consists of the ideals, emotions, morals and goals - ٢ chosen for life and justifies and account for man's life individually or socially, consciously or unconsciously. The word 'clear' for these cultural aspects is like needing light and special glasses to see things, without which nothing would be .observable

The clear, unobservable aspects of culture – which account for its observable aspects :– are of different kinds

.Selfishness and greed for power -١

.Unintelligible racism and patriotism -٢

General ideas and ideals that have been of interest to man throughout history, like -٣ .science, art and well-being

Some of the clear aspects of culture attract man with their ideal, desirable appearance. The way to deal with them is for man to refer to his own self. Since man has fallen quite far away from his own self nowadays, they have also put aside

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original, pioneer culture. As we know, the clear aspect of culture interprets man's life in all its aspects. If man turns to himself again and finds the supreme goal in his life, he .can change and improve the clear aspects of culture

The supreme goal of life creates pioneer culture. The supreme goal of life answers the six questions – Who am I? Where have I come from? Who am I with? Where have I come? Why am I here? Where do I go from here? – thus accounting for where it .stands in the universe, and acquiring an original culture

Diversity of Cultures

Can a society have diverse cultures? Can the society survive different cultures? First, we must see what cultural diversity means. Let us begin by studying several forms of :culture

Cultures that are harmonious because they have original commonalities, like holy -١ religions. Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrians, Sa'ebeens (followers of the prophet John) :and other God-sent religions can live in harmony, for they have the same

a) faith in the origin of the universe

b) faith in God's wisdom and will

c) faith in afterlife

d) faith in human dignity

e) faith in the necessity of man's proper life

Cultures that have the same basic principles of natural life and ideology. Cultures -٢ that have the same belief about the desired mental life can reach harmony, even if .they are not religious

Cultures that differ in their interpretation of the universe and the supreme aim of -٣ life. Such cultures may be able to live alongside each other for

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a limited period of time, but the disturbances and contradictions they cause each .other will soon destroy their harmony

If various cultures have the same ideas about things useful for man's physical and .mental life, they can coexist harmoniously

Acquiring Cultures

Cultures are diverse, so people and societies may be subject to acquiring or transferring cultures. We must take the issue into consideration whether cultures can be absolutely acquired or not. Should cultures be totally accepted or should we study ?the culture we are to acquire first

If the culture is a pioneer one, we definitely must accept it and endeavor to transfer it, for man's perfection-seeking potential considers such a culture as desirable to man. .Furthermore, no culture should be accepted without study and refinement

The elements and aspects of the culture should be evaluated and criticized to make sure the inappropriate elements are not transferred; culture transfer is not always correct, and only those cultures that are based upon human values – which makes them useful and constructive – had better be transferred. The elements of such cultures, like science, industry, pioneer arts and supreme moral ethics, can bring about remarkable developments in human societies, like Islam did when it entered

.Iran and many other countries

Sometimes, on the other hand, culture transfer leads to corruption and mental disruption. Such cultures make human life nihilistic and ignorant toward social values .and the people

Factors that Can Preserve Cultures

Some cultures are stable and sustainable. They can prevail for a long time and in various societies. The factors that

:can make a culture stable are

First, the positive relationship between the culture and some necessary components of the society. For instance, the special culture Indians have toward animals is necessary due to India's specific environmental or ideological factors, whereas other .societies have neither such beliefs nor the necessity to do so

The second, factor is time. Cultural elements become more firmly fixed through time and also more attractive. The continuity of a cultural element, however, does not .necessarily mean that it is correct or attractive

For example, selfishness has been quite common throughout the history of mankind, and few human beings have succeeded in correctly assessing themselves and controlling their selfishness. Does the mere fact that selfishness has prevailed mean that it is correct and well-established? Obviously not, for the stability and continuity of a phenomenon in various aspects of human life does not necessarily mean that it is .righteous and justified

The traditions and customs of a nation are the third factor. As cultural elements, traditions and customs affect different people, and create a specific identity that can .provide the culture of the society with continuity

The fourth, factor is the compatibility of cultures with facts. Any culture that can be

.compatible with the fixed principles of human life will be stable

If the factors that make a culture stable belong to its ethnic necessities, they must be studied. If the necessities are due to the people's mental principles and rules, time cannot ruin the necessities; if they are based upon the beliefs

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of influential figures among the people, the stability of the culture depends upon how .influential these individuals are, and how logical they are

In brief, the mere firm establishment of a culture among people does not imply its originality or its compatibility with the truth. Although when a culture deeply infiltrates inside people it does become like lenses in their eyes through which its followers see the universe, since many cultures of past and present prove baseless when analyzed, we can say that for every positive step man takes on the path of his evolutionary life, he must analyze the culture that dominates his society, throw away any sedentary .elements and prevent them from inhibiting his development

Why Cultural Elements Lose Their Harmony

As we have already said, culture consists of various elements, which in harmony can provide members of the society with development, elevation and continuity. In most societies, however, there is unfortunately lack of harmony among cultural elements. Intense disorder in the elements of a culture can lead to the destruction of the whole culture. The most important disorder in the culture of a society occurs when there is a divide between the spiritual principles and human values. The factors that can bring :about disharmony among the cultural elements of a society are

۱- The selfishness of the social leaders can cause disorders in some cultural elements.

۲- Hedonism is of the most significant of factors making cultural elements .disharmonious

۳- Greed for authority can also, in many forms, demolish cultural values.

We should also keep in

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mind that harmony among cultural elements in a society does not necessarily mean that all elements originate from the same principles, for every cultural element or phenomenon must arise from its own, specific origin. It does not matter, for example, for the moral culture of a society to originate from emotional principles, whereas its scientific culture may be intellectual and observational; likewise, artistic culture may arise out of abstract tendencies while historical culture originates from observable, .realistic elements, and religious culture is based upon pure spiritualism

?Can Culture Undergo Evolution

Some people believe that culture has undergone an evolutionary progress throughout history. These thinkers consider the advances achieved in some cultural elements such as science and man's making use of his potentials and talents as evolution in human culture. If evolution means scientific and technological advances, man has undoubtedly made progress with regard to his contact with the world and his fellow beings, for the necessity to adjust life and man's sense of domination and benefit-seeking has led to developments in some cultural phenomena in history. But when it comes to components of culture that are to develop man's soul, there has been no evolution. In other words, man's material culture has made progress, but the other :aspects have not. For instance

- .Man still has to make himself committed to defy the culture of selfishness
- The culture of kindness toward human beings, constructive love, creating charity .and greatness has vanished
- The culture of righteousness being the highest and using power to uphold righteousness and executing

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.what is good and right has waned

- The culture of scientific conscience has been marred by greed for fame, power and .selfishness
- The culture of caring for geniuses and constructive figures and using them correctly .has faded away in today's societies
- There is no culture of constructive relationship between people; human beings .behave toward one another with savagery
- If human culture has really had evolution, why does man ignore the most :fundamental principles of his life

a) an Intelligible life

b) human dignity and grace

c) responsible, intelligible freedom

d) all laws should be equally applicable to all people

Man still suffers from cultures influenced by Machiavelli, fighting for survival and greed for power. Stagnant evolution in culture has deprived most people of realizing the supreme realities and following them. People cannot comprehend intelligible beauties. The culture of mechanistic life has disabled man's understanding of the .beauty of the universe, justice, freedom and dignity

Nowadays, committing immoral acts is the preferred way to achieve one's goal in political cultures. The logic of human economics has turned into consumerism, and the .culture of making a living for life has become living to make an earning

The Fundamentals of Western Culture

The principles we see as dominating cultural life in Western societies today that can be considered the basics of Western culture. This does not, however, mean that all people in the West believe in them; there are some who actually defy these basics.

The important thing is that these principles govern the life and behavior of the people in the West. Let us

:take some of these principles into consideration

۱- Worldly life is fundamental: Western man has no goal beyond life in this world. They believe that this world is man's ultimate location of existence in the universe.

۲- Absolute freedom: Any individual or group can do as he wishes, as long as they do not disturb others. Thus, the individual's life for his own sake has no meaning, for man can do the filthiest of actions legally as long as he causes others no inconvenience. Western culture emphasizes mutual coexistence, not human effort on the path to an intelligible life.

۳- Greed for power: Power plays a crucial role in Western culture. It has made cooperation, affection and tolerating legitimate actions of other human beings mere tools for reaching power. The powerful do their best to disable man in order to reach their own animal desires more easily.

۴- Hedonism: Western culture encourages hedonism. Some Western so-called "thinkers" have even used science to promote hedonism. If human pleasure is downtrodden, they believe, man will fall into mental disorders and complexes.

۵- Desire for seeking profits and advantages: Western culture sees man as always seeking his own benefits and desires. That is what has led to so much exploitation of various peoples and loss of human life

۶- Machiavellianism: Machiavellian beliefs dominate the political culture of the West. Human principles fade away, and politicians can use Machiavellian principles to ignore human values.

۷- Pragmatism spreads: Another basic characteristic of Western culture is spreading pragmatism without correctly interpreting it. If

Western thoughts were based on the premises that mere emphasis upon abstract concepts is not the only way to practically use true facts, and an intelligible interpretation of the facts of the universe were presented, the West would never be what it is today. Unfortunately, the current trend is judging as true or false based upon only observable actions. Thus, the criterion for being the truth is only observable .actions

Ignorance toward the limitations of science: In the West, man pays attention to -۸ only science and what he gets from his physical senses and laboratory devices. Religion, moral ethics, philosophy wisdom and mysticism are overruled because they .are regarded as non-scientific

The incapability of Western philosophies: There is no question that ever since many -۹ years ago, not only has the West failed to present a systematic philosophical school of thought or world-view to man, but has even been unable to provide a significant number of profound, meaningful – though scattered – material. Alas, man cannot interpret or freely choose his way of life without a general understanding of the four .(relationships (man-himself, man-God, man-his fellow beings and man-the universe

Prolific, profane arts become popular: Although there is a concept of perfection -۱۰ hidden in art, what exists in the West today is prolific art. Lowly, decadent concepts are presented in the most attractive form to fascinate people. Prolific art and using culture in the service of one's desires and lusts is a factor that can destroy original .human cultures

?Man and the Universe: What Should Man Do

point

There

:are four basic aspects to man's relationship with the universe

Knowing the universere -۱

Perceiving the universe -۲

The changes in the universe -۳

Changing the universe -۴

:The factors that can activate the four basic aspects mentioned above are

.Scientific, ۲. Philosophical, ۳. Intuitive, ۴. Moral, ۵. Wisdom, ۶. Mystical, ۷. Religious .۱

There are several points we must consider when discussing the aspects and factors :mentioned above

The identity and boundaries of these aspects and factors is not so clear-cut to - ۱ make it impossible for them to become distinct and unmixable in the human mind or spirit. For example, we may have both scientific and intuitive knowledge of a fact; however, some people may not be capable of understanding one thing by two .different ways simultaneously, so they must sacrifice one to gain the other

The criterion for categorizing the aspects into these four kinds is that when the - ۲ "self" encounters "anything other than the self" – the world outside and the world inside – it either engulfs and dominates it, thus gaining knowledge about it, or understands anything other than the self by the powerful universe-discovering senses it has in it, which is called receiving the universe. The human self-gains knowledge about facts by means of its communication with the human mind. If it proceeds to abstract, judge, compare, analyze, prioritize and theoretically select, and achieve a supreme kind of influence by means of extremely high feelings, it will have achieved

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.reception

There is a time in every human being's life when one realizes that there is a much -۳

higher state than their current one, and if the human being decides to achieve that more elevated position, the changing process has already begun. Free will, of course, .plays a highly significant role in man's changing process

Man cannot change evolutionarily unless he recognizes his unity with others. In -۴ other words, the “self” (the ego) must be harmonious with other “selves;” the “self” ”.cannot change without changing the other “selves

Thus, man cannot be indifferent about others on the path to evolution. For a developed, elevated human being cannot bear to see others suffer or be oppressed, and always endeavors to help them develop. Man will never change without trying to :change others, too. There is also a good deal of hadith supporting this

من اصبح و لم يهتم بامور المسلمين فليس بمسلم

Muslim is not the one who wakes up in the morning without caring about other“ ”.Muslims

:Now let us take the seven factors into more detailed consideration -۵

a) Scientific knowledge: includes making contact with facts about the universe by .means of observation and experiment

Generally, any form of scientific knowledge consists of contact with facts about the universe for the purpose of learning them, by means of experiments, observations and conclusions about directly or indirectly observable topics or phenomena .concerning the universe, whether in the world inside or in the world outside

b) Intuitive

knowledge: involves direct reception of facts without making use of sensory or experimental observations; i.e., Perceiving the truth beyond qualitative or quantitative phenomena and observable beauties. Intuitive reception requires going through the appropriate preliminaries and paths. Intuitively recognizing beauty, for

.instance, it is necessary to make sensory contact with beautiful phenomena

This contact is not, however, in manner in which man can understand how and when he will intuitively recognize beauty. In other words, specific intuition about beauty cannot be regarded as a synthesis based on the previous interaction of several units, or as a certain result of direct logical comparison arising from two major and minor .premises

c) Moral knowledge consists of the development and flourish of knowledge gained by the senses and other tools of knowledge and intellect in an inside guided by conscience. Thus, when a human being of high moral ethics and values gains knowledge of mankind and the universe, the knowledge will always flow through him like something that is continually renewing itself. The knowledge will never form a .barrier between man and the truth; it will never be used for selfish desires

d) Knowledge by wisdom: If we consider the first four forms of knowledge mentioned above as man's motive and guide in life, the mystic knowledge they acquire can be called wisdom. Here, man harmonizes the four kinds of knowledge, and uses them in .order to move toward intelligible life

e) Mystical knowledge: If the aspects mentioned above are accompanied by a

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divine light than places man in the domain of the attraction of the truth, making man .move toward it, man will achieve mystical reception and understanding

f) Religious knowledge: Religious knowledge consists of faith in the properness of acquiring these six aspects in order to move along the path of divine attraction with .the determined principles based upon what holy prophets of God preached

None of the seven factors are produced by the human mind. One or several factors -۶ of knowledge have arisen and been used by man depending on the conditions of the time and locations he existed in. Most people have only used some of them; very few have been able to gain them all; Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) and Avicenna

.were among those very special ones

The seven factors can support and complete each other. Some thinkers believe that each of the seven factors have a specific, distinct identity, and conflict with each other, but this calls for criticism and further consideration. In fact, the seven factors cannot be separated, for each completes the other. For instance, man can use technology to discover some aspects of the human nature, but he can never claim that he has discovered man scientifically as man really is. Likewise, it is wrong to claim that one has explored the entire universe intuitively. When the human character gains one of the factors, in fact, if it realizes what other factors exist and what they can do, it will feel insufficient, and attempt to achieve

the other ones, too. If man only pays attention to philosophical knowledge of the universe but knows that some of his research must rely on scientific data, he will feel .that his explorations are not complete unless he gains scientific knowledge, too

Knowledge of the Universe by means of the Seven Factors

Scientific knowledge of the universe: consists of identifying the phenomena in the -١ universe in order to discover the laws and principles that control them. The fact that water boils at ١٠٠ degrees Centigrade is a natural reality, and understanding it is a purely scientific issue. Likewise, ٢×٢=۴ is a mathematical fact, for first we make contact .with the limited by means of our senses, and then our mind abstracts from them

Philosophical knowledge of the universe:The fact that we mentioned above – water -٢ boiling at ١٠٠ degrees – has several aspects, and one of them is philosophical. Heat involves motion, and motion is a philosophical issue. ٢×٢=۴ also can be considered from a philosophical point of view, for the question arises whether these numbers are .conventional or abstract

Intuitive knowledge of the universe: It may be imagined that the examples given -٣ above have no room for intuition, but if we look at scientific contact from a much higher point of view, intuition will also play its part. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi

:says

ذرّهها دیدم دهانشان جمله باز گر بگویم، خردشان گردد دراز

I saw tiny, open-mouthed particles. If I were to tell you everything about them, it .would take ages

The above verse

.implies intuition

Intuition involves the reality that activates interaction of substances from movement or movement out of substance interaction, guiding particles toward the field of factors that prolong and preserve their existence and also guiding the preserving field .toward the particles. In a nutshell, it moves the identity of every being

Thus, we must say that all scientific theories involving nature and its relationship with man, include a general subject upon which intuition is possible, and other subjects concerning the world of nature where intuition is possible are those that enter science .by means of discovery. As we know, no discovery is possible without intuition

Intuition also takes place in discoveries, too. Abstraction, which takes place in mathematical theorems, is an intuitive matter, for the truth of numbers cannot be .reflected in the mind by any qualitative or quantitative aspects at all

Knowledge of the universe from a moral ethics point of view: Separating the moral -۴ aspect from the scientific and philosophical aspects has led to harmful effects on man's life. Those who defend such a separation believe, "When we are studying and doing experiments about an observable phenomenon in the lab, it does not matter whether our relationship with people is based upon affection or hatred and revenge. .It is not important whether we are using the lab by force or legally

Even when we are busy testing, we should not think whether the results of our research will be advantageous to man or not." Moral knowledge makes man accept

facts

are he has understood them, and reflect them to others. Such a human being will never make other facts fade away by learning about one fact; he will never let his .character be imprisoned by a certain fact, making him fall behind other facts

Wisdom and knowledge of the universe: Studying the two mathematical and - ۵ natural theorems mentioned above from the viewpoint of wisdom makes man aware of the great potentials in his brain and soul that are activated by gaining knowledge of these two theorems; he also realizes that the universe is founded on a supreme .wisdom that has made all creatures move toward a certain end

Here, man realizes that knowledge of the two above mentioned theorems is the .effect of a universal wisdom that has been presented to us

ای خدا ای خالق بی چند و چون آگهی از حال بیرون و درون

قطره دانش که بخشیدی ز پیش متصل گردان به دریاهای خویش

قطره علم است اندر جان من وا رهانش از هوی، وز خاک تن

O God, O Indisputable, O Aware of all inside and out Creator! Connect the drop of knowledge you gave us to your seas. Free the drop of knowledge in me from desires .and lusts

Here, Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) means that if the knowledge man has gained is freed of lusts and desires with God's help and kindness, it

.will shine with wisdom and mysticism

Mystical knowledge of the universe: here, man achieves an understanding beyond -۶ formal sciences, and sees a brilliant light in the universe that is not due to senses,

reason or intellect; such a light can change what you know into what you see. Thus, in this form of understanding, man recognizes his dependency – and that of his .knowledge – upon the universe in the form of intuitive knowledge

Religious knowledge of the universe: Religion approves of any knowledge that – ۷ reveals facts and knowledge of them to man. Religious knowledge creates a kind of light in man that makes his soul more fertile and productive. The religious aspect has .all the other six aspects mentioned above

Perceiving the Universe by means of the Seven Aspects

It seems that knowing differs from understanding (i.e. receiving). Knowing is the product of a fact arriving the mind and its awareness. Science and knowledge means man merely has a form of the fact in his mind, but when he understands it, the fact .understood becomes a part of his character. He finds himself dependant upon it

Those incapable of such understanding or reception had better go to the mountains one night of bright moonlight and put their physical, chemical, mathematical, astronomical and all their other viewpoints aside for a few minutes, and observe the spectacularly harmonious flow of the stars, the glorious silence of the mountains, the beautiful silvery moonlight spraying over them, and the exquisite music of the waterfall which amplifies the meaningfulness of the scenery. If man's mind

and soul is even normally sound, his reception of these units and their whole will reach .a limit where he will wish to be a part of them, or feel them as a part of him

Perceiving the universe from a scientific aspect: Scientific knowledge differs from – ۱ understanding it. Scientific knowledge is mental understanding of facts, but scientific understanding means man's soul acquiring the facts. We must remember that scientific knowledge and scientific understanding and acquisition do not depend upon each other. Man may have scientific knowledge, but he can be quite far from scientific reception, or even vice versa. However, the more comprehensive and complete .scientific knowledge is, its reception and understanding will also be greater

۲ -Perceiving the universe from a philosophical aspect: Philosophy means the knowledge of the basics and fundamentals of the universe or its creatures as they are, so philosophy can provide the human soul with the factors needed for understanding the universe. Man can gain complete knowledge of the universe, and achieve internal recognition and understanding of the basics and fundamentals of the universe. The best reason for such reception in man is the unique sense of excitement and joy man feels when its basics are founded in him. No sound man would say:

به جهان خرّم از آنم که جهان خرّم از اوست عاشقم بر همه عالم که همه عالم از اوست

I see the world lovely and beautiful because God, the most beautiful of all,

has created it.

when watching beautiful scenery, Sa'adi must have received basic knowledge about the universe when he composed the above verse.

۳- Perceiving the universe intuitively: In intuitive understanding, man's inside makes direct contact with facts. In fact, intuition is the highest form of understanding, and it can discover the truth. Thus, the certainty it results in is clearer than that of science and philosophy.

۴- Perceiving the universe with a moral aspect: Morals make the human soul flourish, so that it can attract the good and intelligible ideals with an aware conscience. Moral ethics clarify man's understanding of the universe. Those who do not have good manners and temper, see the universe as dark and illusive, for their internal refinery is unable to purify the facts about the universe pouring into them. Their inside is already full of wishes and desires, so they regard as facts as baseless; the world never seems serious to them.

۵- Perceiving the universe by wisdom: Understanding the wisdom of the universe and man's own existence, which has been emphasized by the holy prophets and great men, too. One cannot understand the universe without recognizing its value. Here,

man uses all of his potentials and powers to achieve the truth about the universe and his own existence. In philosophical recognition, man's existence understands the .general basics of the universe without realizing its value and properness

Perceiving the universe with a mystic point of view: Here, the brilliant light of the -۶ universe, which is a ray of divine

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glory and beauty, is realized. This form of reception of the universe cannot be put into words. One cannot possibly understand such an extreme feeling without getting a .taste of it

Perceiving the universe with a religious aspect: As religions aims to make the -۷ human character and all of its potentials and aspects flourish and develop, all of the six forms of reception mentioned above are necessary to man. In Islam, if one is to make contact with his own existence intuitively, one must take all of these forms of .reception into consideration, and take any necessary measures to gain them

Changing by means of the Seven Aspects

Gaining knowledge about the universe by means of the above seven aspects can bring about "change" in man. Such change, which includes development of man's spirit, is the ideal of all prophets and men of wisdom. No thinker familiar with man and his various aspects would ever doubt the innate desirability of this form of change. Generally, by change, we mean revolutions in the human ego, from degradedlevels to .higher degrees of wisdom, reception and acquiring divine ways and values

Change with a scientific aspect: If man separates his change and development -۱ from knowledge, and considers the two as totally distinct things, he is in fact battling his own self. Such a separation means, "I am a being for my own sake, and my knowledge of scientific issues, like ۲×۲=۴ or explosives are dangerous are something totally separate." We must remember that man gains knowledge and uses it to make

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weapons that can be used to save or destroy mankind. A human being full of animal desires and selfishness may take steps toward the annihilation of humanity. That is why we say that we must create the proportionate kind of development and change .in each specific person by means of education or any other scientific knowledge

Change with a philosophical aspect: Since the aim of philosophy is achieving general -۲ knowledge of the highest basics and concepts of the universe, and it saturates man's sense of seeking generalization and unity, philosophy can have a significant role in .changing man profoundly

.Intuitive change: True intuition causes man's development -۳

Change with a moral change: Acquiring elevated moral values guides man toward -۴ perfection. Moral change provides the grounds for mystical change. Mystic ecstasy and excitement will be useless without man having purified himself of everything immoral. Alas, some jump to mystical change before achieving moral change, and this .is premature maturity – better called "out-of-place" maturity

They expose their soul to unreal expansions and contractions and fluctuations, and fall into despair and depression because they have not yet suitably adjusted or .purified their own standing and duty with regard to the universe

If man's internal wishes and lusts are not harnessed, he will fall for crude, mortal desires, and see himself and his personal ideals as the absolute. Such people will fall into conceit and arrogance, although it will seem like extreme modesty and humbleness. All in all, man will never achieve mystical change

.and development unless he acquires moral values

Change with wisdom: By wisdom here we mean not pretending to be wise or - ۵ drowning in fascinating jargon, but awareness of the supreme aim of life and the universe, and acting based on that awareness. By awareness, of course, in wisdom .we refer to mental and spiritual clarity, not usual awareness

Change with a mystic aspect: In real mysticism, the human ego is not regarded as -۶ the end; in fact, the ego is put on the path of change and development, freeing it from its natural self. In this form of change, all of man's forces and potentials are attracted by God. In mystical development, man's knowledge shines with mystical intuition in .any state he may be

Change with a religious aspect: Here, all of the six aspects mentioned above - ۷ .receive attention, for religious change covers all aspects

Changing Others by means of the Seven Aspects

When man is on the path of change and has achieved spiritual evolution, he can also guide others to the path. He cannot say, "Others are not my business, for I have achieved spiritual completeness." It is only in negative mysticisms that those who claim to be perfect ignore others' development. In order to guide others toward perfection, the guide himself should be a total master. In other words, the trainer must have achieved what he intends to provide his trainees with. As the renowned :Philosopher Mirdamad is believed to have said

ذات نایافته از هستی بخش

کی تواند که شود هستی بخش

خشک ابری که شود زآب تهی نآید از وی صفت آبدهی

How can one who has not been blessed try to bless others? How can a dry cloud ever ?produce rain

Changing others from a scientific aspect: Scientific knowledge is as important in - ۱ changing others as it is in changing oneself. Those who intend to develop other people should not separate people from the universe in their effort to help them focus on the .domain of concepts and supernatural meanings

Changing others from a philosophical aspect: As we know, by philosophical - ۲

knowledge we do not mean mental chess games with a bunch of rigid concepts and sacrificing the facts of the universe with pleasant jargon; in fact, here we refer to understanding the basic fundamentals and principles of the universe. Philosophical training and development differs from teaching philosophy, for it requires preparing the trainees' minds to comprehend philosophical facts, and allow their human ego to develop having understood the basic fundamentals of the knowledge of the universe. Then, the great world inside man can flourish. Thus, philosophically developing and changing means the conversion of the little knowledge he has of the universe into its .complete, detailed form

Intuitively changing others: The trainer cannot create intuition in his trainees. What -۳ he can do, however, is to prepare their souls and minds to understand and receive intuitively. The trainer should intrigue mental concentration and the ability to focus in

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his trainees, free them of their predefined principles and basics and make them aware of their hidden potentials. We must remember that two kinds of intuition can :be possible in intuitive developing

a) General intuition about the universe, which occurs in great explorers of mystic .knowledge

b) Intuition about some facts of the universe and the supernatural. However, intuition of all facts and realities without need for intellect, sensory preliminaries and .experimental activities is possible – at least, on the path of normal life

Changing others with a moral aspect: Acquiring moral qualities can make man's -۴ potentials flourish. In fact, man's life cannot be changed without developing his moral values. Those trainers and instructors who ignore man's great moral aspects and only focus on scientific and technical issues, achieve no more than preparing man for his battle for survival. Man cannot be made to develop mystically unless he is also morally .developed, too

Changing others by wisdom: Here, man must acquire the highest of human - ۵ qualities, to such an extent that he uses the qualities for decorating and transacting with his own disposition. Trainers and instructors cannot guide their trainees toward this aspect merely through moral aspects, for the basic aspects of wisdom must exist inside the individual himself if he is to exactly feel the necessity to follow them. In fact, only wisdom can provide the basis for moral ethics; wisdom to moral ethics is as the .soul to the body

Changing others with a mystical aspect: Self-knowledge is the first -۶

step in mystical change. Perseverance – the preliminary to action – and accepting .facts are other important steps

Changing others with a religious aspect:This is the main goal of all prophets God - ۷ has sent. The other six aspects mentioned above are added advantages for human life, which if added to the religious aspect, can bring about man's ultimate development and perfection. In this aspect, one can move on the path of divine attraction and reach intelligible life by means of belief in basic religious principles and .observing its soul-developing mandates

The "What There Should Be" and "What There Is" System

point

A value is something useful to man. If something has no physical or spiritual :advantage for man, it cannot be regarded as a value. There are two kinds of value

Conventional values: These values are credits various peoples designate - ۱ :themselves. They can be categorized into two groups

a) Values entitled as "taboo ethics." Touching the chief's food, for instance, is considered as prohibited in some tribes. Such affairs are values for these peoples. .There is no doubt, however, that these values have no real basis or origin

b) Cultural values: Each nation or ethnic group consider themselves a series of values that are rooted in their beliefs, viewpoints, artistic elements and other natural and social affairs. For example, Norooz, coinciding with the beginning of spring, is one of the values arising from Iranian cultural and social background.

2- Values based on facts: These values are related to man's nature. The stronger its connection with the human disposition, the more essential the value.

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The principle "People's lives should not be disturbed," for instance, is a value-based issue rooted in man's nature. There are two reasons why it is essential:

a) Disturbing people's lives leads to personal vengeance or legal punishment.

b) Disturbing people's lives causes discomfort, annoyance and tortures the conscience.

Any form of annoyance to others influences the souls of both the disturber and the disturbed. Defying values based on facts affects them. If people resist values, the values will not be defied. If someone commits suicide, for instance, he has actually confronted a fact with another real phenomenon. In suicide, it is not a matter of one credited act destroying another; in fact, a mental disorder is destroying the most original reality of all – human life.

By ignoring values rooted in his true nature, man causes disorders in his soul. If, for example, one defies justice – commits an atrocious act, in other words – he is in fact damaging his own character. A liar causes disorders in his soul and his ego when he lies, consciously or unconsciously.

The Relationship between Values and Scientific Research

As we know, values are "what there should be;" they are "obligations." And what there should be relates to man's free will. In other words, duties, obligations and moral values are meaningful when man does them by free will. "What there is," however, is

irrelevant to man's free will. Some people think that moral ethics have nothing to do with science and philosophy, for science and philosophy are related to "what there is," whereas moral ethics

".and values pertain to "what there should be

The value-based realities rooted in man's free will have a scientific aspect. To elaborate on this, we must consider the definition of free will. Free will consists of the supervision and dominance of the human character upon the positive and negative poles of the action with good-will goals. If such an action takes place, it will be an .action done by free will

Those who see values as non-scientific believe that the human character influences actions of free will, so we cannot discover the factors and motives that have brought about actions of will; we are thus unable to predict actions of free will by means of regulated calculations like the law of causality, and unpredictable phenomena cannot :be scientific. In response to their statements, we must keep a few points in mind

۱ - It is a scientific principle that if an object has arisen out of various causes and .factors, studying the different possibilities can show us its cause

The greater the distance between man and the optional action that will occur in the future, the more likely the occurrence of events and incidents that will affect it, or even prevent it. Naturally, we have to scientifically calculate all the possibilities and discover what events and incidents that may occur until the time of the action; the nearer we get to the time we intend to do it, the more we know about the factors and events that take place, so the clearer

.our picture of what will happen will also be

۲ - Man's actions based on his free will can be scientifically studied in two different

:domains

a) In the domain of the factors and motives of the action: As we know, man never does anything without a motive, and the greater the motive, the more likely for it to happen. Also, the vaster the range of man's motives, the higher the possibility of the .action occurring

b) In the domain of the human character there is also a direct relationship between the strength or weakness of the human character and his optional actions. The stronger man's character and the more awareness the individual has about the preliminaries and goals of the action, the more likely for the individual to do it. The more committed the human character is to moral values, the more accurate our .explanation and justification of the optional action will be

An action of free will can also be scientifically studied after its occurrence, which -۳ .itself shows that the occurrence of actions based on free will is scientific

The nature of values can be identified and studied scientifically and philosophically. -۴ We can ask, for example, what is the nature of justice, sacrifice and dutifulness? Other questions may be posed about why values have arisen and what consequences they have. The results of commitment to moral values can be studied scientifically. What results high moral values leave in the occurrence of man's mental tranquility and the improvement and development of the society

is a scientific issue. If we consider high human moral values as having proper human qualities that arise out of moving on the path of evolutionary preserving the human disposition, we can ask philosophically whether man being put on this path is in his nature or does it happen externally. If the answer is the latter, why has this ?phenomenon arisen in some human beings

All in all, value-based realities cannot be separated from sciences. That would weaken .and even insult the sciences

”The Relationship between “What There Should Be” and “What There Is

Some Western thinkers, David Hume for instance, believe that we cannot deductively reach “what there should be” from “what there is.” In other words, they think that values and morals cannot be extracted from science. There is no relationship ”.between “what there is” and “what there should be

Contrary to Hume's idea, there is harmony among “what there is” and “what there .should be,” and that the latter can be deduced from the former

Human beings have the potential to live with values, which is the best reason that proves there is harmony between “what there is” and “what there should be.” Although most people's life goes nowhere beyond purely natural life, few people do have a life based on values. In other words, they have activated the human perfections inside themselves. Man is the only being who can be addressed by .responsibilities and do's and don'ts, for he has the potential to use his responsibilities

If “what there should be” and “what there shouldn't be” cannot be extracted out

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of “what there is,” the whole reality of the universe will be meaningless. If we accept that the universe has a mystery and glory which makes it a sign, man's existence must be an effect of God's wisdom and will. God's wisdom says that man is full of hidden potentials, based upon which a series of do's and don'ts can be presented. Can ?we accept that God may give us the means for evolution but not its instructions

Even if the Qur’an makes no direct statement that man's existence is a sign that makes him commit himself to the do's and don'ts that help him develop and perfect himself, the meaning of the existence of divine wisdom and will inside man proves the reality that man is responsible for gaining an intelligible life, just as the universe is a .sign telling us that we are responsible with regard to what is good and what is bad

We must keep in mind, however, that attention to how harmonious and glorious the universe is does not lead to the deduction of religious duties or responsibilities. No one

can say that the wisdom and glory of the universe makes us realize that we should pray in the morning. Throughout history, many peoples have presented many duties as legal, moral and religious instructions, but none have been proven by the harmony of the universe. What we mean here is that the amazing order and harmony in the :universe proves is

قطره ای کز جویباری میرود

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از پی انجام کاری میرود

(.Every drop of water passing by in a stream has an aim)

The conscious human being must realize from the order and harmony of the universe .that he must do his own part, too

"An Analysis of the Relationship between "What There Should Be" and "What There Is

:If we consider truthfulness as a "should," our analysis would be

۱ - We should be truthful. Why? Because truthfulness brings about trust in social .relationships

.Trust and reliability in social life is a must

۲ - Why should we accept social life? Because various aspects of human life are only .activated in social life

۳ - Why is it necessary to activate the various aspects of man's existence? Because .man's life flourishes when these aspects are activated

۴ - What is so important about this prosperity? Because such a prosperity is hidden in .man's nature, and proper life has its continuity in its own nature

The final response cannot be met with another "why." We cannot ask why the needs of the nature of life should be fulfilled, for the nature of something is logically

.unintelligible

The issue that life naturally causes its own continuity to be necessary depends on what there is, but the issue that effort should be made for life to continue is not dependant only upon what there is; it needs another rationale, which can be considered from two points of view:

Viewpoint ۱: The desirability of the positive characteristics of life itself makes it go on. From this point of view, there is no factor beyond natural life to prove the

necessity of life. This is why the desirability of life leads to hedonism and greed for power.

Viewpoint ۲: The issue that effort is needed for life to continue depends on God, the creator of life. This is the theologians' point of view. They believe that the "what there should be" ordered by God is based upon man's sound reason and pure disposition.

All moral values like justice-seeking, righteousness-seeking, and moderating selfishness can be analyzed by means of these two basic principles:

Principle One: It is "what there is" that is rooted in man's natural talents. In other words, man innately has tendencies toward justice, righteousness and other moral qualities. If the talent for seeking justice, righteousness and moderating selfishness did not exist, there would never be so many outstanding, developed figures in history.

Principle Two: "What there should be" originates in "what there is." The desire for development and evolution, which innately exists in man, needs some guidelines beyond the purely natural self – "what there should be" – from divine religions to prevent man from falling into selfishness and hedonism.

There is another way for elaborating on the relationship between "what there is" and "what there should be," and that is giving moral issues a conditional form – i.e., if desired human spiritual development is the issue, justice is necessary. In other words,

we can state unconditionally that justice is needed for man's spiritual development. Although such a theorem cannot prove the necessity of spiritual development, when we suppose that development is desirable

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.and needed, the necessity of justice for development is also conveyed

The Relationship between "What There Should Be" and "What There Is" in the Qur'an

One: Verses in the Qur'an that prove the necessity of faith and piety based upon the .facts of the universe, like ٢:٢٨

Two: Verses that prove the necessity of thought and reasoning based on witnessing .and studying the signs shown in the universe, like ٣:١٩٠-١

Three: Verses in the Qur'an that present the aimed, righteousness of the universe, to help man understand the necessity of obeying God and realize what he should do. In other words, the universe cannot be right and dominated by God unless one accepts the necessity of realizing one's duties about what to do and what to avoid, like ٣:١٩١ .and ۶:٧٣

Four: Qur'anic verses that consider recognizing signs of God as the basis of gratitude .and thankfulness, a duty itself, like ٢۵:۶٢

Five: Verses in the Qur'an that consider witnessing miracles performed by prophets of God – signs of "what there is" far beyond material and physical facts – as a factor causing religion and observing what God wants us to do and what God prohibits us from, such as verses ١١٣ through ١٢١ in The Battlements, and also verses ۶۵ and ٧٣ in .Ta Ha

The Relationship between Ideology and World-view

:There are three theories on the relationship between ideology and world-view

Ideology arises from world-view. Any kind of ideology must be based upon a - ١

.specific form of world-view

Ideology and world-view are not directly proportionate. In other words, ideology is -٢ not dependent upon world-view, for world-view concerns “what there is,” and one cannot reach

”.what there should be” from “what there is“

If one is to study the relationship between ideology and world-view, it is necessary -٣ .to discover what their goals are

?What Is Ideology

Here, by ideology we refer to a series of acknowledged principles which are desirable enough to become one's beliefs, an original component of his mind and soul, and interpret his life 'as it should be.' It is quite obvious that commitment and responsibility .in life, from a general point of view, calls for interpretation and justification of life

?What Is World-view

:Man's mind can make contact with the universe in three forms

a) Direct scientific contact by means of contact between the senses with the world .outside

b) Receiving facts, like realizing the beauty of phenomena or how glorious or great .something is in the eyes of a thinker

.c) Contact with the whole universe, which leads to philosophies

All three are a kind of world-view, for when scientific contact with the universe is made, though it is itself a kind of world-view, only certain components and effects of the world are revealed to man. Making contact with facts by means of reception also shows faces of the universe to man. Contact with the whole universe – absolute world-view – is impossible, for a number of general principles and concepts cannot

describe and interpret all aspects of the universe. All in all, each of the above-mentioned forms of contact between man and the universe reveal a picture of the universe to man. Having seen the three basic forms of world-view,

now we can proceed to the relationship between world-view and ideology.

If world-view means identifying some parts and phenomena of the universe and their interrelations – and man ignoring the general, fundamental laws and principles dominating the universe – such an incomplete, limited form of world-view cannot make a specific belief for man and guide him toward certain duties he should fulfill. In such a world-view, the human mind does nothing more than a mirror in contact with facts. It merely reflects the phenomenon in itself. Such a superficial knowledge cannot direct man to a definite ideology.

On the other hand, if world-view refers to associating all factors of internal perception with the external world rather than only associating the senses with the world, such a world-view would definitely bring man out of his indifferent, neutral side in regard to contact with the universe, and make him accept certain beliefs and perform certain actions as his duty. In this form of world-view, man is not confined to merely scientifically knowing the universe; he also considers his own perceptions about the universe, like glory or justice. Thus, we can say that overall, comprehensive world-view can lead to ideology.

Man has a variety of potentials and talents, so he can make contact with the universe from different aspects. We can, for instance, see aesthetic aspects in the universe since we possess such a sense. We use justice in our individual or social life because we have the potential to understand justice.

Another original human potential

is man's questioning himself and his life. "Who am I?" he asks himself, and this takes

him to the conclusion that makes him behave in a way to discover the philosophy of his life. In other words, if man's world-view is in the form of an isolated part of the universe photographing it, he will never achieve an ideology, but if he believes that, "There is a universe which I am an active part of; I am born from the parts of this universe, and gradually, with the knowledge I gain and the potentials and talents that flourish in me, I see a nihilistic world and life as equal to my own oblivion," he will definitely come to the conclusion that he must submit to certain actions, and cannot act according to his wishes and desires any longer.

Life, Rising Up

point

۱- Human life is an immensely glorious phenomenon. Some people, however, have taken it for granted, considering it as a normal thing available to everyone. Those who have tried to interpret life materialistically and regard the source of life as unknown or arising from alien creatures from outer space, are incapable of seeing the supreme values of life.

۲- Life is virtually respectable, and seeks its own activity and preservation under any circumstances. Man will never feel reluctant toward life unless mental disorder darkens his picture of life.

۳- To discover the aim of life, man must step much higher than his unconscious, fatalistic nature. If man limits life to a purely natural

one – feelings, actions and desires arising from animal instincts and reproduction – he will never find an elevated aim for his life. If man is to find the true meaning of life, he should go far beyond his natural life.

۴- Life has two dimensions: physical and spiritual. Since the material aspect of human life is the grounds for man's mental and spiritual activity, any disorder in his physical aspect will affect the other, too. The mental and spiritual aspect of human life are

essentially important, but should be activated by means of proper development and .flourishing further

Human life cannot be discovered without activating the spiritual dimension of life. -۵ As a general rule, when man drowns in some phenomenon, since he cannot control it, not only will he never understand it deeply, the phenomenon will be unable to show its true self, too. If man's life flourishes, his starting point and destination in life will also .reveal themselves

If the spiritual dimension is not activated, man's life will pass with baseless games, -۶ attractions and mockery. Sometimes man deceives himself with limited knowledge, and sometimes his natural instincts influence his reasoning and wisdom, making him move along the negative path of life, interpreting life with the pleasure he gets out of .satisfying his natural instincts

The selfishness and hedonism caused by man's indulging in his instincts makes him misinterpreting his life, and struggling along the wrong path for a whole lifetime. If man's spiritual aspect is activated, his tools of

discovery will no longer be affected by desires and pleasures, but logically flourish, for the spiritual aspect of life casts a kind of light upon all of man's knowledge, preventing any deceit. Without activating the spiritual aspect of life, life loses its true form, and .man will drown in the superficial prolific of life

Human life has no value without the activation of the spiritual aspect. Respect - ۷ toward man's nature is not possible unless the spiritual aspect of life is activated, and that happens only when all humans are considered as equal. As we read in the Holy :Qur'an

من قتل نفسا بغير نفس او فساد فى الارض فكانما قتل الناس جميعا و من احياها فكانما احيا الناس جميعا

Whoso slays a soul not to retaliate for a slain soul, nor for corruption done in the land,“ shall be as if he had slain mankind altogether; and whoso gives life to a soul, shall be

(as if he had given life to mankind altogether."(۵:۳۲

When man becomes so evil that he insults God by killing another human being – and insulting the creator of the whole universe is in fact equal to insulting the whole universe itself, too, which man himself is also the most valuable and glorious part of – killing one human being is equal to killing all of mankind, and giving life to a human being is equivalent to giving all of humanity life. This is why the human disposition of a human being who has a deep understanding

.of truth is so heavily respected

Throughout history, the human nature and disposition has been paid respect for :various reasons, each of which calls for study and criticism. Some of them are

a) Throughout history, all outstanding figures have generally advocated respect for the human disposition, and the public, influenced by them, have imitated them in .doing so

b) Crude, primitive emotions and feelings have also led to support for respecting the human disposition. However, this motive has no strong basis, so it cannot be regarded as a stable factor. It fades when cruelty and filth is done by man, or man's selfishness .overflows

c) The third reason is religion, for all religions see respect for the human disposition as their highest item of anthropological agenda. In divine religions, respect for the human disposition is based on God's will, which has created man's life as glorious and .precious

d) Deep feeling for the human disposition; recognizing and receiving man's disposition in the general harmony of the universe. Such a feeling is in fact the supreme religious feeling mentioned above. Of course, man's reaching this great and profound feeling – which regards each human being as a fundamental component of the general .harmony of the universe – calls for development and perfection

e) Some regard scientific, industrial and artistic advances and human cultures as the motive for respecting the human disposition, whereas such issues can only prove the greatness and importance of human potentials, not the necessity of respecting the human disposition. During the last few centuries,

science has made a great deal of progress, but respect for the human disposition has waned.

f) Humanists also support the value of man, referring to the decree of wisdom and reason on the necessity of supporting mankind. Depending on reason and wisdom – theoretical wisdom and reason, at that, which does not concern supreme human values and principles – respect and value for the human disposition cannot be gained. Reason-based humanism, which has become hugely popular these days, has still not been successful in bringing human beings together in friendship and affection, or creating respect and love between them. The only motive that can make value and respect for the human disposition a reality is a religious one.

۸- Concepts like character, ego, spirit and soul will only exist when the spiritual dimension of man's life is activated. Drowning in selfishness and hedonism destroys the harmony in man's management of his life, inhibiting his character, ego and spirit – which are vital for the evolution of man's life – from flourishing. When man feels hedonism is all he needs, he will not seek spirit or character anymore.

The Factors that Can Elevate Man's Evolutionary Life

The human soul has the potential for development and perfection; in order to achieve them, we must figure out what factors or methods can lead man to an evolutionary life. Here, we will provide ۲۱ principles for it:

۱- Man's natural self cannot be the leader of man's soul. If the human soul drowns in selfishness – in other words, if it is degraded down to

its “natural self” – it will be unable to evolve. The natural self (ego) manages the initial, compulsory life; it never undertakes activating supreme levels and aspects. Let us :quote from Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) from Divan-e-shams

بر گشاده سوی بالا، بالها زده اندر زمین چنگالها

خواجه می گرید که ماند از قافله خنده ها دارد از این ماندن خرش

The soul has spread its wings, heading for the heavens, but the body clings to the) earth – this world – with its claws. The wealthy man weeps, for he has fallen behind (.his group; his donkey is laughing at this

:God helps man with his spiritual evolution. As Imam Ali has said -۲

عبادالله ان من احب عبادالله الیه عبدا اعانه الله علی نفسه

O servants of God! God's most precious servants are those God has helped to crush“ ”.their lusts and desires

God, of course helps man know and elevate his soul when man himself wants it. As :Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi says

چون چنین خواهی، خدا خواهد چنین حق برآرد آرزوی متّقین

(.When you want it, God will do it: God grants what the pious ask for)

The potential and grounds for the will and enthusiasm to do good deeds is hidden inside man; the best reason to prove it is the great, glorious group of developed .righteousness-seeking humans that have existed throughout history

,If such a will and progress toward development and perfection does not flourish

several inhibiting factors can be named, which we can generally categorize into two :groups

a) Man's hallucinations and inductions to himself, implying that it is too difficult for him .to gain mystic knowledge and elevate his soul

b) External factors also sometimes inhibit man. Unsuitable social circumstances, the lack of constructive education and many others factors are what man must overcome and do his best to move toward development and perfection; he should not shrug off .developing himself

The most important form of justice is justice toward oneself, which is not possible -۳ without harnessing one's desires. Self-preservation is the most significant factor that makes life go on. When the human disposition is released from all laws or human .principles, it will fall into its natural path

Any activity aiming to preserve the natural self is destructive to man. If man proceeds toward elevating his soul – in other words, if he defies his desires and lusts – he has taken the first step toward making justice a reality. If man cannot do justice with regard to his own forces and potentials and save himself from drowning in lusts and ?desires, how can he ever provide others with justice

One must not attempt to fulfill others' wishes and desires to the extent that one's -۴ own soul becomes corrupt. When governing people requires convincing them, and convincing them must be done by satisfying their desires and lusts, the result will be nothing but the corruption of the soul of the ruler and his

.helpers

One who is sensitive about the improvement and refinement of his own soul, will never be ready to corrupt it in order to fulfill others' wishes; rather, the shining rays of .his brilliant, good-deeded soul can cast light on others, too

:Make use of yourself for yourself. As Imam Ali says -۵

فاخذ امرو من نفسه لنفسه

".Developed man makes use of himself to his own benefit"

خویش را تسلیم کن، بردار مزد وانگه از خود بی ز خود چیزی بدزد

چون به هر میلی که دل خواهی سپرد از تو چیزی در نهان خواهند برد

Make me true, and take any reward you like from me; but if you give your soul to)
(.anyone you wish, they will steal your inside from you secretly

Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi

Man possesses potentials and talents that blossom on contact with the world outside. Some people make use of their potentials in order to achieve their natural goals; still others use them to gain human goals – these people make positive use of themselves. They activate their positive potentials, and enjoy perfection and .development

:If you do not know yourself, you are doomed. Let us quote from Imam Ali -۶

هلک امرؤ لم یعرف قدره

".If man does not recognize his own value and potential, he is doomed"

We cannot make use of ourselves without knowing ourselves. Man cannot activate his talents and potentials if he does not discover them and know about

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.them

Nobody will pay any attention to one who pays no attention to his/her own self. If -۷ man does not care about himself, and does not activate his talents and potentials, he .should never expect others to care about him, either

:As Imam Ali has said about this essential principle of evolutionary life

و اعلموا انه من لم یعن علی نفسه حتی یکون له منها واعظ و زاجر لم یکن له من غیرها لا زاجر و لا واعظ

Lo and behold, he who does not care to be his own internal advisor and conscience,“ ”.nothing and nobody else will do that for him

No one, not even God's prophets, can guide man toward perfection and development unless man himself attempts to progress. Man must have the will to construct and .develop himself if he is to move toward evolutionary life

If you know yourself, you will know your God. As the Holy Prophet of Islam – ۸ :Muhammad has said

من عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه

”.If you discover yourself, you have in fact discovered your Lord“

Thus, if the human “self” – the human” soul”, in fact – is comprehensively known and :discovered, the greatest step toward knowing God has been taken, for

a) One of the aspects of the “self” is a monotheist nature which puts man in contact .with God

b) The human self can gain complete knowledge of the universe, and see the divine .light shining on the universe

c) Knowledge of the unity of the human disposition, with all its diverse qualities, is a sign of

.the conceptual multiplicity of God's qualities

d) Abstracting the human soul – the human self – from material aspects and the .dominance of such abstraction on the body without making physical contact with it

e) All the activities of the human disposition without subtracting anything from it or .analyzing it

.f) Creating works of art or mathematical operations is a sign of how God works

g) The imaginations formed in the human mind are examples of creating facts with no .physical background about them whatsoever

Always calculate and balance yourself. Self-calculation and self-balance is a - ۹ fundamental principle on the path to elevating evolutionary life. Some may think that in these days of machine-like life and people's hectic lifestyles, no one has the time to do self-calculations, whereas they would take serious steps toward doing so if educational systems and social leaders made them understand the crucial importance of having an original character. If man analyzes and calculates his own nature and character, life will have a different meaning to him; social leaders and .those responsible for education must realize how necessary this is

In evolutionary life, you must not degrade the value and glory of your own self by -۱۰ :submitting to profanity and being prolific. Let us quote from Imam Ali

و اکرم نفسک عن کل دنیه و ان ساقتک الی الرغایب فانک لن تعتاض بما تبذل من نفسک عوضا

Consider your nature, your disposition, as too great to be traded with lowly, decadent" affairs, even though your nature may encourage you toward them, for they

are quite attractive and satisfying. But you will lose far more than you gain if you fall ".for them

Giving in to lowly affairs and decadence is the greatest barrier on the path to development and perfection. Not all means can guide one to the aim of life. Man should not sell the elixir of his existence for a meager price. If the human ego is lost, nothing can ever replace it. The value of the "self" is higher than anything else. Countless human beings have sacrificed themselves for meager desires and lusts, .thinking that they have gained something

One of the most significant effects of evolutionary life is adjusting oneself with - ۱۱ regard to others. The correct criterion for the relationship between human beings is a crucially important issue. Here, by relationships between human beings we do not

refer merely to social life, for the main factor that makes social life is not making any disturbances in life and providing the grounds for people's talents and potentials to be .harmonized and put to better use in order to make social life a reality

The criterion necessary for the relationship between human beings on the path toward evolutionary intelligible life is far beyond the rules and criteria in social life. That criterion is nothing but the human ego – a purified human ego, of course, that .moves on the path toward development and perfection

۱۲- Supreme effort is the strongest force of evolutionary life. As Imam Ali has said,

قدر الرجل علی قدر همته

"A man's

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value and merit lies in his effort and endeavor."

:Extreme effort has some conditions

a) Supreme aim and dissatisfaction about what the society imposes upon man.

b) Stepping beyond the waves of mortal desires and evaluating natural pleasures, .which keep man busy and prevent him from development and elevation

c) Logically interpreting the concepts of "possibility" and "impossible." Some people who have enough power and will to accomplish things mistake the possible with the .impossible; they imagine what they aim for is beyond their abilities

d) Will power has a crucial role in making supreme effort fruitful, for man will .accomplish nothing without will power

:With supreme effort, man will achieve

- Patience: Supreme effort gives man firmness and tranquility against the negative .consequences of pleasures and sorrow

• Revealing the secrets of the soul: Pleasures and sorrows deprive man of the secrets in his soul. With supreme effort, man can put up a resistance against them.

• Social constructivism: Only human beings of supreme effort can construct the society.

• Freedom: Supreme effort can set man free.

• The highest level of freedom increases the heart's capacity for gaining goodwill and perfection.

۱۳- One of the signs of entering evolutionary life is clearing the soul of all hatred and frustrations. If we hate another person intensely, to the extent that hatred fills our souls and affects our other mental activities, it will be a horrendous grudge. Grudges make man lose his ability to see things righteously. Man ignores human values and will continue until he destroys the one he hates.

۱۴-

You cannot proceed on the path of evolutionary life unless you stop expecting rewards for your good deeds. If man's relationship with others becomes a form of trade, he will never make it to the path of evolutionary life. Some people never seem willing to give anything unless they gain something in return. Trade and reward and punishment are phenomena necessary to the natural ego, but man must step beyond them if he is to achieve development and evolution.

۱۵- Feeling that your purely natural life is insufficient can make you start moving on the path of evolutionary life. If man does not feel eager to become perfect, if he does not suffer from his shortcomings, he will never make any progress on the path to evolutionary life. Alas, many people do not feel the need for reaching perfection, so they take no action toward eliminating their shortcomings.

۱۶- In an evolutionary life, rewards and punishments are based upon intentions.

Intention consists of decision and objective action, the merit of which depends on one hand upon the value of man's effort in deciding to do so, and on the other hand upon man's mental motive. If man's decision is based on a negative motive, his character will deteriorate a positive motive will, in contrast, boost his personality. This is why we .can say that reward and punishment – rise or fall – depends on our intentions

The basic factor in man's evolutionary life is the fact that God watches man's - ۱۷ every single

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word, action and even what goes on deep inside him. If man believes that God is aware of his every move – internally or externally – he will avoid evil. Such a man will not avoid wrongdoing for fear of social punishment, but rather due to his shame toward his creator. Belief that God is at all times observing every aspect of human life can elevate man's evolutionary life, for man now knows that God wishes the best for him, and has provided him with intelligible ways to get there, and the tools he needs to .do so; obeying what God wants man to do is the path to perfection

Man's evolutionary life cannot be elevated without activating the human intellect, -۱۸ which in turn cannot serve man without spiritual purification. If intelligence enjoys the advice and directions of a pure conscience and sound nature and disposition, it can guide man toward progress and perfection, for intelligence alone is unable to provide man with evolutionary advance. It should be accompanied with self-purification in .order to remove all the inhibiting factors on its path

The human ego requires natural flourish and expansion in order to proceed on the -۱۹ .path of evolutionary life

If the perfection-seeking human soul starts its climb toward supernatural progress without any chances for relaxation or rest, and constantly cuts its ego off from all its natural characteristics, forcing them to obey its furiously accelerating development, the ego will undoubtedly suffer, losing the management of

its body, which serves as its steed. Thus, moderate dealing with the ego is necessary .for elevation toward evolutionary life

In evolutionary life, man's progress should be forward-looking at all times. - ۲۰ Sometimes imitating one's predecessors' beliefs and traditions prevents man from logical activity and progress. This is why we must state that on his path toward evolutionary life, man must analyze the culture that dominates his society, and remove any sedimentary elements in it. Imitations are steel dams inhibiting man's .advance toward evolution

:There are two kinds of future man must have in mind on the path to evolutionary life

a) The future of this worldly life, for which thoughts and intelligence are a crucial .necessity

b) The future of man's other life, which if man ignores or defies, interpreting his .worldly life will also become impossible

Those who are the most obedient of God also have the best intentions about their -۲۱ ,own selves. As Imam Ali has said

عبادالله ان انصح الناس لنفسه اطوعهم لربه و ان اغشهم لنفسه اعصاهم لربه

O servants of God, those people who are the most obedient are the kindest to" ".themselves, and those who defy God are betraying themselves the worst of all

Man, in contact with God, sees Him supervising and dominating his ego. Such a feeling makes man believe that he is always in the realm of God, so he will not fall astray from .God's path

Intelligible Life, the Fundamental Domain

Human life can be divided into two kinds, purely natural life and intelligible life. In the former, which is

a somewhat animal-like life, people are engaged in a battle for survival. Their sole aim is to fulfill their natural desires, and since their life is totally engulfed by worldly needs, the positive aspects of humanity are entirely forgotten. Man's infatuation with purely natural ways of life has greatly influenced the history of mankind. Let us take a look at :some of its effects

Stupefaction replacing consciousness -۱

The destruction of positive forms of love -۲

Conflicts between power and righteousness -۳

Self-bestrangedness -۴

Selfishness and stubbornness -۵

Misjudging the human character -۶

Human relationships based on personal benefit -۷

Various philosophizations tending to vouch for human corruptions -۸

Considering oneself as the goal and others as one's means to achieve it -۹

Ruining the environment -۱۰

Man's conflict with his own self -۱۱

The destruction of man's highest emotions and unity -۱۲

The waning of human affection and sympathy -۱۳

Sacrificing the goal for its means -۱۴

Aimless deconstructing and weakening original cultures -۱۵

Losing one's aim in life and falling into nihilism -۱۶

Uncertainty and anxiety about one's future -۱۷

Self-alienation -۱۸

The aimlessness and uselessness of the arts -۱۹

Increasing suicide -۲۰

Social maladjustment -۲۱

Pitiful incompetence in explaining absolutes and relativities -۲۲

The Definition of Intelligible Life

A conscious life which guides the compulsory and pseudo-compulsory forces and activities of man's natural life in the path toward evolutionary goals by means of more freedom of choice; thus, the human character is gradually developed and guided toward the highest end of life – playing a role in the whole harmony of the universe .dependent upon divine greatness

Let us take a closer look at some of

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:the most important aspects of this definition

- A 'Conscious Life': Living an intelligible life, man is quite conscious of his life. His character is independent, and everything he does arises from his original personality, not imitating of others. In an intelligible life, man is totally aware of the principles and .values of life, and follows them

- Guiding the compulsory and pseudo-compulsory forces and activities of man's' natural life toward evolutionary goals by means of more freedom of choice': moving on the path of intelligible life, man is well aware of the fatalistic, compulsory causes and factors surrounding him, and tries to make the most of his freedom. For instance,

if he wins a better position, he does not allow the factors around him that may lead to pride or arrogance make him fall astray from his progress toward perfection and commitment to great human values. In an intelligible life, man achieves the highest level of free will, and the more he makes use of his freedom in his will, the greater his .intelligible life will be

We should not neglect the critical role of environmental factors and social leaders in making intelligible life possible. In unsuitable social conditions, freedom of will – and subsequently intelligible life – will have no chance to flourish. Therefore, leaders of .societies should encourage proper human virtues and values

- Towards evolutionary goals': In an intelligible life, all of man's actions, words, even' his mental activities aim for

perfection. He never feels that he has finally become perfect; he is constantly trying .to raise himself to greater levels of perfection

- Gradually developing the human character'. All of man's positive potentials and' talents flourish in an intelligible life, and he finds a life of happiness and prosperity. His naive, childish feelings fade away, and his petty interests are replaced by greater, more valuable ones. In an intelligible life, the human character uses internal and external realities correctly, for every aspect of his life is undergoing evolutionary .metamorphosis

- Being guided towards the highest end of life': Man cannot achieve the highest aims' of life by drowning in the compulsory and pseudo-compulsory tendencies of his natural self. If he wants to accomplish the greatest ends in life, his actions must be logical and conscientious, and he should be determined enough to make use of the .mental activities needed to interpret the highest aims of life

The Role of Wisdom in an intelligible Life

Wisdom in an intelligible life is not confined to theoretical wisdom – although

theoretical wisdom too is a necessary tool in an intelligible life – for anything useful to man's life cannot be ignored in an intelligible life. Both theoretical wisdom and practical wisdom – man's alert, active, motivating conscience – are employed in an intelligible life to elevate and develop the human character. They harmoniously provide the grounds for elevation to the level of perfect wisdom, which is of great .mystic significance

Here we must criticize schools of thought such as rationalism for overemphasizing the role of

wisdom, and considering it dominant over man's life without any divine interference at all. Many rationalists ignore the fact that if man's opportunist, ambitious nature is guided toward divine aspects, it will move on the path to an intelligible life, where man can step out of his "self-orientated" nature and be attracted by his "real ego" to an intelligible life – and this is the only way man can abandon war, bloodshed, atrocity and all other evil, and change "the history of purely natural life" into "the history of ."mankind

The Feasibility of an intelligible Life

Some people believe that man is generally incapable of achieving an intelligible life, and only an exceptional few have been able to leave "purely natural life" for a ."“intelligible life". In other words, most people are drowned in their "purely natural life

We must first say that man does possess the capacity for accepting an intelligible life, for when he feels a passion for something, he will aim for it, and bear any inconvenience he has to in order to achieve it. Those who love fame or wealth undergo a great deal of trouble, pain and insults in order to achieve success in .acquiring them

Second, when man moves on the path of an intelligible life, he feels that he is approaching something not impossible, but a truly original life, which he will find highly .valuable

Also, though the number of those who have developed themselves into an intelligible life is low, they are not totally exceptional people, for when man moves on the

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path of intelligible life, he feels that all of the necessary elements for perfection exist .in him, and are in no conflict with his innate natural self

Social leaders should try to help their people realize what a conscious life feels like. If leaders of societies make their people understand how necessary a life of consciousness is, they will never protest. If human beings become aware of the glory of justice, honesty and wisdom existing in actions and words and the glorious sense of duty and love for peers, they will easily accept it. By reinforcing and developing man's positive potentials, he can be made aware of the importance of understanding and .adopting the necessity of endeavor toward an intelligible life

This is the same mind that can so delicately gather wealth, fame and defeat his rivals by means of brilliant ideas, and high intelligence throughout his purely natural life; surely, can it not understand that its wisdom and intellect can be employed toward higher goals, such as serving his peers, justice and upholding the right? Can it not realize that it is able to seriously calculate the mysteries of the universe, not merely ?act like on a stage

When discussing the feasibility of intelligible life we must keep in mind that the human character can be developed, "built up." Man can improve himself through calculations made in his intelligence and conscience. The important point is identifying the way to explore reaching intelligible life, and that is not impossible. If man steps beyond

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his "purely natural life," he can enter "intelligible life," where he will undergo eleven :changes

- ;his raw feelings change into elevated emotions

- his scattered brainwaves turn into “specific thoughts about a certain topic”;
- his raw kindness becomes “intelligible affection”;
- his high expectations change into “motivating hopes”;
- his nominal likes and interests become perfection-creating ones;
- being content with worthless concepts of goodness and perfection give way to effort toward discovering the real truth about them;
- pure imitation and passiveness will disappear, and be replaced by original, direct thought and truth-finding;
- fractional, theoretical chess games in the mind will be replaced by harmony between sound wisdom and realistic conscience;
- elevated freedom will replace desires;
- seeing oneself as exceptional as and higher than others will change into understanding the highest human unity and equality among humans as being the means or the end.
- Being content with the milestones of life in this world as man’s main goal is replaced by always considering oneself as still on the way.

A Closer Look at the Aspects of Intelligible Life

When man moves toward intelligible life, every aspect of his life will undergo dramatic change. Let us take a closer look at some of them:

۱- The human character in intelligible life: According to the following three principles, the human character is virtually valuable:

a) Man is a being who has various talents and is ready to step up to higher stages of perfection and greatness. Throughout history we see human beings who ascended to the pinnacles of humanity, showing the most brilliant human ideals.

b) Despite all the

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diversity people have in race, appearance or secondary qualities, they still have the same universal harmony. In other words, they can move along the ultimate path of .life

c) In spite of ethnical, social and other differences people have, they feel a kind of value-based unity regarding each other if they are in a well-balanced mental state. Such a feeling is deeply rooted in man's soul, and many of the heroic acts he has shown throughout history depict the unity men have in their common principles and .values

We cannot accept the three above-mentioned principles without believing in intelligible life. In other words, proving the value of human character is a result of accepting intelligible life. This cannot be done unless the “natural self” is overcome. Having stepped beyond his natural self, man can accept the existence of others, understand his basic relationship with them, and regard the human character as .valuable

On the path of intelligible life, man sees great human beings from a vaster, more elevated horizon, as if they are mirrors reflecting divine beauty and glory. Those who obey natural life, on the other hand, are considered worthless, even if they are .socially outstanding

Ethics in an intelligible life: In order to understand how important ethics is in - ۲ :intelligible life, we should compare it with ethics in a purely natural life

a) In purely natural life, ethics consists of accepting principles confirmed by the society, and the reason for obeying

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them is merely to avoid interference between individuals. But ethics in an intelligible

life means considering oneself as part of the whole of human life, which has – as the Qur’an states – divinity breathed in it, and accepting the principle that all human beings come from the same origin. In such a system of moral ethics, man does not wish for others what he would not wish for himself. He does not blindly follow a set of socially established norms.

b) The favorable ethics in natural life consists of following emotional desires and whims, whether they are to the benefit of other human beings or not. Thus, each person does as he/she may please, whereas in intelligible life man's emotions are elevated to harmony with fixed human principles. In intelligible life, human emotions are based on justice considering other human beings as valuable.

c) The basis of moral ethics in purely natural life is accepting and obeying rules arising from choosing a lifestyle decreed by the social trends. In such ethics, great human moral virtues are ignored, and the only thing that matters is what desirable in social life; in intelligible life, on the other hand, principles such as free conscience representing goodness, perfection, and motivating human beings toward that are of significance.

d) In natural life, ethics serves as to enforce social laws and prevent crimes in the society. In intelligible life, however, it is not the servant of man's rights in a natural life or a reducer of crime

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– although if correctly used, it will have such results, too. The aim of ethics in intelligible life is to activate man's greatest potentials and elevate the members of the society.

۳- Law in intelligible life: The purpose of the law is basically to enforce social order and mutual coexistence among members of the society. In intelligible life, it not only does so, but also emphasizes on the rights of human lives. If social laws pay sufficient attention to advancing evolutionary morals and true human love for having a free character, “the natural history of life” would become “the human history.” Human laws

can never be effective unless man's natural self is well-balanced and all human .beings move on the path of intelligible life

Intelligible life insists on having rights for human lives alongside the rights of purely natural life. It makes people realize each other's advantages and spiritual greatness, and enables them to use such qualities; this is what changes a normal living being into Abuzar Ghafari, a wanderer into Owais Qarni, a petty poet into Hakim Sanaee, and a .criminal into Fuzayl Ayaz

Social relationships in intelligible life: Human relationships in intelligible life is based -۴ upon humanity, not seeking advantage of one another. In purely natural life, however, man only considers his own benefit, and his relationships with others are only to serve that purpose. In intelligible life, the way a teacher behaves with his students goes way beyond his salary. The teacher relates to not only their senses

and thoughts, but indeed to their souls. In intelligible life, therefore, careful attention to the highest aim of life is what makes the link among people and provides human .unity

Science in intelligible life: It is vital for man to gain knowledge. Intelligible life and -۵ purely natural life agree on this. The difference is whether science makes man's natural self inflate, or control it. In a purely natural life, man may fall into infatuation for science, and consider nature only superficially; in intelligible life, however, man makes use of science as a means to advance toward his evolutionary goals; wisdom and free conscience control human desires, and all of man's physical and spiritual activities are guided by God. Here, man sees science as a divine ray of light –shining .on human societies by means of the human senses, brain, nature and laboratories

Ideology in intelligible life: Merely seeing the world outside and the world inside – -۶ just "taking photos of it, in fact – is quite different from observing and gaining knowledge about the universe by means of precision tools and determining where man stands as the knower. Man is not a living being who merely reflects the facts

about the world inside himself like a big mirror, without any awareness of his own role in discovering them. Man has the capability to know everything about the universe and his knowledge of the world is by no means limited to mere photographic .observation

Such mental effort, dominant knowledge and observation leads

to a vital result, and that is the fact that there is an extremely high philosophy and wisdom guiding the universe toward a very elevated destination by means of certain laws; every particle in the universe, when considered in relation to other particles, confirms that

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(.There is a cause behind even a drop of water going by in a stream)

The ideological principles understood and accepted by means of these basics undoubtedly enter man's deepest levels of psyche, and influence and explain his life. Such a life, accounted for according to the highest destination of the universe is called .an intelligible life

Arts in an Intelligible Life: When an artist steps into intelligible life, he does not want -۷ art for the sake of art itself anymore; he wants art for the sake of humanity in an intelligible life. Here, the artist pictures facts as they are and as they should be by means of his finely elevated emotions. In an intelligible life, the artist pays careful attention to the aim of life, and attempts to use his art to guide the fatalistic activities of man's natural life toward freedom and development. When a work of art is created, motivated by the cause of making intelligible life come true, it is not only an appealing work relieving man's fatigue of natural life, but also a wave of intelligible life itself, "reinforcing this kind of life in other

members of the society and letting them get a taste of it, too." Art in an intelligible life aims to develop man's awareness, freedom and perfection, not his animal-like wishes .and natural desires

Politics in an Intelligible Life: Politics is managing people's lives on the path to - ۸ achieving the highest of physical and spiritual goals. Throughout history, politicians drowned in purely natural life have degraded the life of human beings down to "things." Machiavelli has written the most possibly logical account based on purely natural life. He did not even for a moment consider intelligible life and the prospect of making it a reality in human societies. Instead of taking man's immense range of potentials into consideration, Machiavelli expressed his own internal thoughts. He believed that managing the purely natural life of people arises from "self-love." In an intelligible life, however, politics has a goal, and a starting point and a path. The goal of politics in an intelligible life is creating factors of awareness and adjusting the fatalistic forces and activities of natural life by providing the development of freedom. The starting point is relief from self-love, and the path is continual searching by the .human character in an effort to reach the highest aim of life

Economy in an Intelligible Life: As far as a purely natural life is concerned, self-love -۹ confirms man's freedom in claiming dominance and absolute possession of all creatures. In a purely natural life, man considers all natural and man-made blessings and

facilities as his own, and thinks his possession of them is unlimited; in an intelligible life, however, man believes that since all human beings have the right to live, the results of human mental and physical endeavor must serve to safeguard and preserve the whole of human life, and be present in the total rhythm of the universe. Such a human being considers goods at the service of life, not life at their service. Man's wishes and desires are harnessed in order to achieve social coexistence in an intelligible life, and economy is also considered to be a factor serving to guarantee man's survival, not inflating his natural self. In brief, man should let others also be

provided with the financial blessings he has, and attempt to make their life more comfortable; he should not selfishly want everything for himself, and trample all .values and morals in his commercial activities

Education in an Intelligible Life: In an intelligible life, education includes reinforcing -۱۰ and enhancing the factors that influence cognition and understanding the original facts about life, and motivating the children in a society to gradually move from purely natural life to an intelligible life. The primary duty of education in an intelligible life is to dramatically change the mental and spiritual system of the learner by teaching him/her the basic principles of education, so that the learner considers them as vitally necessary as food and water are essential to his/her survival. In an intelligible life, moral virtues like honesty and

justice are necessary to man's nature, and the educators and teachers of the society .should try to activate human virtues

If education is anything other than what we mentioned above – i.e, if the facts taught as the basics of education are regarded as not a part of the human nature or virtues – not only will the learners be deprived of progress toward development and .perfection, but also be influenced by external factors

Man and Freedoms

point

First, we must clearly distinguish the three basic terms involved in discussions on :freedom – free will, release, and freedom and define each

Release:The state of release can be defined as the elimination of all restrictions or -۱ barriers preventing man's will toward doing anything. For instance, when a person is in exile, he is forced to stay there. Whenever this restriction is removed, the person is .totally free

:Freedom:can be divided into two levels -۲

a) Natural freedom involves the selection of a particular end or means out of various ends and goals before us. This level of freedom is higher than being released, which .only conveys the omission of all limitations, and prevents the flow of human will

b) Elevated freedom includes the domination of human character over the positive and negative extremes of an action. Thus, the more control man has over the positive .and negative poles, his freedom will be greater, and vice versa

Free Will : consists of the character's supervision and control over the positive and -۳ negative poles of an action, or deservingly

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.giving up an option in order to accomplish perfection

Both of the above-mentioned levels of freedom are quite distinct from release; with .freedom, man's personality aids him in his actions

:Let us consider how freedom and free will differ

a) The notion of merit-based selections and aiming for perfection provides the point of distinction between free will and freedom, for freedom is not concerned with the .fact whether the action is merit-based or leading to perfection or not

b) With freedom, doing or not doing something is enjoyable, for the feeling of freedom :arises from two side products which are both ideal to man

- firstly, the absence of any kind of restrictions limiting man's will, and
- .second, the feeling of being able to select ends or means out of infinite possibilities

Feeling free causes the most delightful of emotional states in man, as the feeling of being alive itself does. With free will, on the other hand, not only does man not seek the enjoyment of being alive, but even makes man perform the hardest of tasks in order to achieve perfection. Nevertheless, carrying out tasks with the aim of reaching perfection refreshes and elevates the soul, which is totally incomparable with natural

.pleasure

c) With free will, the human will, decisions and actions fall into the domain of meritorious deeds, whereas actions performed or refused out of pure freedom .results in a natural merit incomparable to values

The Right to Freedom and the Right to Free Will

At any level, freedom is capable of spiritually and

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mentally developing mankind, provided it fulfills these two conditions. Elevated .freedom, however, is more effective

Condition ۱ : Freedom, whether purely natural or elevated, should not prevent man from moving towards free will and evolutionary development. In other words, the .pleasant feeling of freedom should not block our path toward an intelligible life

Condition ۲ : One's freedom should in no case disturb that others' freedom or free will. Man should thoughtfully attempt to develop his freedom and potentials from purely natural to elevated. Even when achieving so, he should not stop, and strive for reaching a level of free will that can be named intelligible freedom on the path toward intelligible life. Freedom and free will are significant enough to be considered human .rights, just as important as the right to live

The Classifications of Freedom

:We can classify freedom into six different types

:Freedom of belief: can be considered from three aspects -۱

Aspect One: the essence of belief – is man free to believe or not? Can man live with no belief at all if he wishes to? Every human being must believe in something, and it is impossible to find somebody who does not have faith in anything at all, for every human being accounts for his life in some way. Even claiming to live with no faith or

.belief at all is a kind of belief itself

Aspect Two: are people free to live with one sole belief throughout their lives? Are they free to abandon their beliefs or not? Generally, most people

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seldom undergo a change of belief, except in cases of upheavals in their mental and psychological states, which makes them find faith in something else. Of course, if the .change of faith lies in divine realities, it can be a sign of man's spiritual growth

:Aspect Three: what man actually believes in, which can include

- Facts about the components of the universe, such as the order and harmony in its ,creation
- ,Facts about the universe as a whole, like the aim of the creation of the universe
- ,Facts about man, like human anatomy
- Facts about human existence in general, for example the fact that man is capable of ,developing himself into divine greatness
- Facts about human proper virtues and merits, such as man's elevation through .purifying his soul

Since man cannot exist without some kind of faith, it is not possible to ignore all of the .above in the name of freedom of belief, for his life would be inexplicably futile

Freedom of thought: cannot be denied. Hundreds of verses of the Qur'an point out -۲ the necessity of thought. If man were not free to think about the realities of humanity and the universe, God would never order him to do so. As freedom of belief should not be so inordinate as to make human life lose all accountability, freedom of thought should also prevent falling into complete negligence toward life, or hinder man's .mental or psychological activities

Thought should serve the purpose of intelligible

life, not censoring oneself. Thinking about the world and the natural aspects of humanity is perfectly allowed – provided the fact that it does not lead to damages to mankind. There should be a law on the topics suitable for thought about human identity and his values, virtues and merits, for ideals, taste and also social and cultural conditions influence what man may choose to think about. In order to prevent any disorder in people's thoughts and their falling into dangerous speculations, we need a rule: the aim is discovering and understanding man's intelligible life in an objective, .intelligible world

The Freedom of Expression: should be intelligible. In the West, this kind of freedom -۳ :is absolutely unlimited. As Voltaire said

I disagree with what you say, but I am willing to sacrifice myself in order to let you" ".say it freely

I wonder how much Voltaire valued his own self, or if he would still be willing to sacrifice himself and allow such a volcanic eruption of mental and psychological brainwash affect all of mankind if his objections were to the benefit of the rights of all ?of mankind – including the right to freedom

Expressing what is logical and intelligible is quite acceptable, but expressing :unintelligible things has these harmful effects

;a) Emphasis on the expression regardless of what the content may be

b) Useless, irrelevant speeches being sympathetically delivered to people only ;because the speaker considers them important

;c) A chance for people to use futile speeches for their own personal aggrandizement

d) Interesting, amazing

.information given without having any effect on the reader

Expressing realities useful to man – whether physically or spiritually – is not only free, but refusing to express them can be a crime. Freedom of expression faults only when it causes disorder in all true human principles and values and misguides minds. If man were so mentally developed that he would not only tell only the truth, and provide both the speaker and the listener with effective information and sufficient expressions, there would be no problem at all with the absolute freedom of speech – ?but is it truly so

Are today's Eastern speakers, listeners, and researchers all as great as Abu-Reihan Biruni, Avicenna and Farabi in philosophy, or Muhammad Mehdi Naraqi and Sheikh Morteza Ansari in human Gnostics and knowledge, who never spoke a word without prior study, research and thought, and did the same with what they heard from others? And are Western speakers, listeners and researchers nowadays like Aristotle, Socrates, Augustine, Descartes, Hegel, Kant, Whitehead, and Saint Hiller, who spoke ?out of a vast background of study, research and calculation

After a long and deep research on freedom of speech in the Qur’an, we come to the :following conclusions

a) Those who know certain facts or the truth are obliged to share them with others, .for God has made those who know vow to spread their knowledge

b) Any kind of knowledge which is harmless and useful to man – whether physically or .spiritually – should be expressed

c) Apart from making

those who know responsible for expressing what they know, God also obliged those .who do not know to seek knowledge

d) Knowledge should not be taught to those who do not deserve it. On the other hand, .those who do deserve it should never be deprived of knowledge

.e) Those that spread any kind of knowledge useful to mankind will be rewarded

f) Those that know but do not share the truth with others will severely be punished on .Judgment Day

All in all, logical freedom of speech should be supported. However, the reasonability does not lie in the freedom itself, for the meaning of freedom conveys being free to .commit or reject an action, regardless of its merit or harm

Any kind of freedom of speech, thought or opinion physically or spiritually harmful to human beings is considered illogical freedom. When not all people are allowed to comment on things lie medicine or medical treatment, which requires much research and study, the humanities, which determine man's fate, is certainly also thus. Anybody who comments on medical issues with no prior knowledge and only based on illogical freedom, is considered a criminal; now if someone attempts to write, speak and repeat his ideas about various aspects of humanity without any previous thought, study or research, and even try to brainwash people with his attractive, deceiving ?words, will it not be a problem

:Intelligible freedom of speech should be used in accordance with these two principles

a) As far as physical nature is concerned, there is complete freedom

of speech, thought and opinion, whether our knowledge is based on concrete .evidence, probability, or deduction

b) In domains of the humanities and general philosophy, which deal with mankind, “what there is,” and “what there should be,” the supervision and expertise of the .learned is essential

When discovering issues dealing with the humanities and ideology, it is necessary to

both deeply understand the original fundamentals and principles, and have the required honesty, clarity, purity and eagerness to seek the truth, for this is where one's pre-determined principles and ideals proves actually influential. Therefore, any theory or research done on the above-mentioned topics must be presented to learned, impartial experts who will carefully study them and present the results considering the quality, quantity, clarity of confirmation or rejection, and the needed .mental and psychological modifications for the public

Thus, first of all, researchers on the humanities should have two qualifications: continuous, relentless effort and endeavor to discover the truth, and the sincerity and purity that makes the light of divinity shine upon hearts, clarifying man's knowledge. Secondly, the results of the research must be handed to scholars of the humanities who possess the needed knowledge, expertise and justice, so that they can study them carefully before their release. Some may claim that such a method in anthropology will lead discoveries to stagnancy. All research in other fields also, such .as medicine or pharmacology, is thoroughly discussed prior to public release

The above-mentioned suggestions also replaces selfish rivalries with positive competition, for not only does it

engage knowledgeable, fair scholars of the humanities responsible for studying novel ideas in the fields of anthropology and ideology in scientific competition, but also invites others experts to discuss them, thus guiding constructive scientific .competitions into an intelligible path

Freedom of Behavior:This form of freedom is totally unconditional in the West, and -۴ is thus defined: "Do whatever you want, just don't bother anyone." Such freedom of behavior calls for reconsideration, for human desires and wishes do not always obey wisdom and reality. Thousands of the crimes, betrayals, and atrocities in history have been committed because of man's wishes. The provision about not bothering others is ineffective in confining man's freedom unless his desires and wishes are brought under control. How can one who does not believe himself to have any rights or value

be expected to respect others' rights? When corrupted internally, he will never be able to consider others as having the right to live, be great or free, for none of these .terms mean anything to him, let alone respecting them

As we did with freedom of speech, we can also categorize freedom of behavior into two kinds – intelligible and unintelligible. Unintelligible behavior does not follow any law, principle or natural tendency at all; intelligible human behavior, however, is based on certain laws, rules or will-power arising from lawful, natural tendencies. Defining freedom of behavior as “Do whatever you want, just don't bother others” is a .result of incorrectly isolating religion, ethics, law and politics from each other

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Freedom of Slavery in Any Form: Slavery arose thousands of years ago, and intellectuals like Plato and Aristotle considered it as an original social law. It had deep roots throughout history, and fighting it has always been difficult. This is the reason why Islam took a gradual approach to eradicate slavery. Had he decided not to battle it with full force, all the social and economic foundations of the society of his era would :have fallen apart. The methods Islam used to gradually fight slavery were

a) He made no exceptions between slaves and free people in regards to moral virtues .and vice

b) In Islamic societies, slaves found the chance to reach higher positions by showing .themselves worthy of it

”.c) If a man's bondmaid bore him a child, she would be freed as “mother to the child

d) Slaves could work to free themselves; through an agreement with their masters, .they worked to earn the money required and freed themselves

e) In many of his (and also the subsequent Imams') hadith, the Holy Prophet emphasized that freeing slaves is a greatly rewarded deed, which prepared the

.grounds for more and more slaves to be freed and slavery to slowly fade away

f) Teaching people that freeing slaves would compensate for many of the sins they .had done

g) Uprooting the main event that included taking people as slaves – wars. The .occupation of Mecca resulted in all the slaves being freed

h) The prisoners the Muslims took in their battles would be freed provided that they

.taught Muslims their knowledge and skills

i) Many Islamic hadith regard slavery as an unnatural side-effect in man's social life. They emphasize that human freedom is of primary importance in Islam. All human .beings are considered in Islam as being born free and entitled to dying free

j) The Holy Prophet objected to slavery in Africa, Asia and all around the world, stating .all humanity to be free people

:Political Freedom: Two principles concerning political freedom are -۶

- .Every human being has his own free will
- .No one can dominate another human being's free will

According to the former principle, each human being has free will about his/her own lifestyle, provided that it is not legally prohibited, like bringing harm to himself/herself .or to others

In the Society: From Economics to Politics

point

.Let us begin our discussion on social issues with the basic part of any society: work

Work

:There are two aspects to work

Its value as a means: Products or results can only be achieved through work. There -۱ are no exceptions to that. If the simple-minded think that results can be obtained .without effort or hard work, they are wrong

.Its value as a topic: Work, in nature, is valuable -۲

Some thinkers believe that work is merely a means, and has no certain value by itself. We must say that in relation to fatalistic reasons, work has no specific value, but in relation to man, work can affect man, for man consciously aims for a certain piece of work. Some people begin work as soon as the grounds

for carrying it out are prepared; results are of no significance to them. The subject is important for them, so as long as there is a possibility to succeed, they will continue. Those who believe that the value of work lies solely in its results, always lose many opportunities, because they regard them as fruitless. This is why it is said that belief in work as a subject shows how alive the individual and the society is, and the least .opportunity produces the best results

The Definition of Work

.Work consists of an action that has useful results and arises from conscious intention

This definition can apply to all kinds of work. In business, for instance, it can be modified as, a conscious, effective action done on raw material in order to create .positive change in man's living

The Value of Work

There has been a great deal of effort throughout history aiming to prove the value :and right to work. These efforts have basically been based upon two factors

Those who put their physical and mental efforts into producing things were in fact -۱

endeavoring to prove the value of work. Group efforts, however, have begun since two centuries ago, for the labor class needed to be established first. Before that, workers did not attempt to defend their rights, because the products were not large-scale or general (it was the increase in factories and industries that made that possible) and also the fact was ignored that human life wears out gradually by work.

Furthermore, laborers had no cooperation or unity toward

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defending their rights. Man's culture greatly emphasizes that work is valuable, and cannot be accounted for by means of specific formulae, especially in cases in which workers are forced to work. Pioneer culture believes that the worker should be satisfied, and the real wages for his work should be paid to him, for many workers are too concerned with making the ends meet in their own lives to have time to think about the true value of work.

۲- True anthropologists have always preached the importance and value of work. The fact that they have taught man that justice is the basis of social human life shows how important they wanted to show work is.

When discussing the value of work, we must always keep in mind the human aspect of values. If values are only considered as useful things, and man is omitted from their definition, that would not be accurate. The definition should be: Whatever is useful for man, and getting it calls for work or losing something important to man or society, is a value.

In the past, there were various forms of value of work. Feudalism, for instance included three kinds of trade and value of work:

۱- Master and employee share the products

۲- Receiving goods necessary for life as salary

۳- Hard labor for which workers were paid too little

.In other trade systems, the employer paid the apprentice in goods or money

After developments in economics and business, salary and wage became important issues, and the value of work received more

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"?attention. The question was posed, "What is the value of work

:Three issues are to be considered before we can answer the question

a) The scale and unit used for measuring work

b) The scale and unit used for measuring the value of work

c) The scale and unit used for measuring the prices

These units are either physically observable, like work and effects on materials and the prices paid for the work done, or are not, and involve an abstraction which clearly .shows its origin

Work is a phenomenon resulting from man's continual, unrepeatable vital and mental activities. Thus, if we are to have a unit for work, it would be a flow of human life and .soul; it cannot be separate from man's life

Since the phenomenon of life and soul cannot be mathematically measured, neither can work, particularly in the case of mental endeavors, which are extremely more .complex than physical work, and can be measured by means of no scientific scale

In the case of mental endeavor, it is more complicated, for what scientific scale or measurement unit can ever discover what the manager of a large system is guessing about how he can bring about his system's progress? Which scientific measurement scale can be used by a discoverer, an artist or a social pioneer to determine his rout to success? Can we hope to have a scientific measurement someday for the emotional efforts made by man in order to achieve his highest goals? What precision tools can ever determine the measurement units for

education and create a class which can create both the likes of Einstein and Planck and also savage tyrants? Can we expect to see mathematics, physics, physiology and psychology to join forces one day and determine the scientific measurement system that can measure the activities of a faithful soul, which is full of mental endeavor, or physical work that is filled with hope and character and aim for the highest of social .goals and interpretation of the aim of life? Undoubtedly not

The Domains of the Value of Work

The issues on work and value are not confined to a economic aspect; work and its :value had better be studied in three domains

The Purely Economic Domain: Economists deal with the observable effects of work, -۱ its usefulness, demand, production, etc. Man and human values and principles seldom show up in economists' discussions. Some economic schools of thought, like the physiocrats, consider issues concerning work as purely economic, and ignore human beings who do no work at all. They see economic effects similar to other physical issues; they even let the powerful to do as they please – with the excuse of enforcing .social order – which actually allows them to also break any law they like, too

The Socio-economic Domain: Here, dealing with issues on work and its value is - ۲ more difficult, for the social factors of work, production and distribution and the need to prevent inflation and unemployment have a great influence on work and labor. In ,this domain, work and its value find a humane aspect

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.and profiteering tendencies are decreased

However, some intellectuals interpret the society in a way to pay less attention to the value of man; they see the society as a set of individuals who are absolutely free, and should only be careful not to disturb others. From such a viewpoint, social laws only serve to provide mutual coexistence. These thinkers do not realize that man's selfish,

advantage-seeking nature cannot be corrected with mere social laws; the highest of human values and supernatural principles must dominate man's life in order to control .his selfishness

The Human-economic Domain: This domain is related to intelligible life – that is, the -٣ type of life based on divine principles and values. Man's mental and physical forces are not at the service of the power-greedy and the selfish, who tend to use them as buyers of their cleverly advertised – but in fact harmful and intoxicating – goods and increase their own riches. In this domain, work and economic endeavor does not move toward stupefying people and adding to the wealth of the minority of the .selfish. Rather, it serves to fulfill man's real needs and uphold social justice

Various Kinds and Aspects of Human Work

:A preliminary classification of human work can be

a) Mental efforts and positive mental work

b) Physical work

:Mental work can be classified into these groups

Purely mental work: such as mathematical, logical or philosophical thoughts. Purely -١ mental efforts may lead to physically observable results. However, one out of every .thousand mental endeavors may lead to such effects only

Mental work -٢

as a preliminary for physically observable work: Such mental efforts serve as the .preliminary to administer things like designing or engineering activities

Mental work in order to continue with the natural flow of an issue: For example, -٣ thoughts on medicine in order to diagnose an illness or cure a disease, or legal mental effort aiming to destroy atrocity and help the oppressed, which may all lead to social

.justice

Mental work serving to elevate man's individual life and build a desirable social life: -۴ Actions taken with educational aims are examples of this category. Such forms of .work help human potentials and talents flourish

Artistic mental work: Some forms of artistic work are imitative, and can be - ۵ regarded as professions. Others, which are innovative, are exploratory, mental :activities. Mental artistic work can be categorized into three groups

a) Artistic work materialized upon useful material which makes the material look beautiful. The artistic work both fulfills the individual's needs and saturates his .aesthetic tendencies

b) Artistic work that motivates man to achieve intelligible life: A beautiful painting or an .exquisitely meaningful poem can activate man's feelings to gain an intelligible life

c) Artistic work that merely shows the artist's brainchild: This form of work depicts the pinnacle of the artist's imagination, like abstract works of art that are irrelevant to .reality

Political mental effort: This kind of work involves a series of logical thoughts aiming -۶ .to make social intelligible life go on

Exploratory mental effort: The six forms mentioned above follow logical rules, but -۷ this

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form of work goes far beyond logic. This is why most discoverers are not professional logic scholars. Edison was not an expert on logic, and neither were Mendeleyev or Roentgen. Some forms of mental work may serve merely to satisfy our curiosity, .whereas they possess great value to economy and standard of living

From a humanistic/economic point of view, work is highly significant, for it relates to .man's intelligible life

Physical work: Let us further elaborate physical work by considering it from three :aspects

The internal aspect: Any muscular work is accompanied by a series of internal – ۱ factors, some of which are the causes for the work, some others occur tat he same time as the piece of work is produced, and some others occur after the final product is created. The factors that serve as the cause for the work and begin functioning prior :to the work are

- The necessary information for the work
- The willingness, determination and will power to do the work
- The will power to receive and understand parts of the work

In kinds of work that are created by free will, the dominance of the character upon positive and negative poles and the quality and characteristics are also important, for .they manage the internal factors

:The factors mentioned above are related to these four issues

a) The information and experience about the work

b) The eagerness, reluctance, force or emergency to do the work

c) The quality of managing the factors and internal phenomena concerning the work

d) The ideological

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viewpoints concerning the work

Many kinds of work – mental and physical – have been carried out by means of .ideological motives throughout history

The internal factors that are simultaneous with the work are using mental and

muscular energy, continuous awareness about doing the work and readiness to .prevent inhibiting factors

Some of the mental and spiritual phenomena that occur subsequent to the work are: new experiences, the joy of having completed the work, or the feeling of sadness or .frustration of having done something we are forced to do, or we do reluctantly

.The external aspect: Man's muscular movement in order to carry out the work -۲

The aspect of picturing work in the material: Here, by picturing we mean the - ۳ various shapes and qualities that materialize upon the materials used as a result of .the work, and a product is made

The Relationship between Work and Human Life

As we know, in order to gain complete knowledge about a phenomenon, we must study it in relation to all other phenomena it pertains to. For instance, if we want to study a tree leaf, we usually remove a green leaf from a tree and study it in the lab by means of sophisticated equipment. In such research, we are considering the general leaf separate from the branch, tree, water, the sun rays and the material it gets from the tree. Such a study will be incomplete, for the leaf we are studying has no relation .with them

Likewise, when studying human work and activities, again we must identify all affairs and

issues related to work, especially man's own life, which has the most fundamental relationship with work. Work, in return, is the most significant factor in man's development. Throughout various stages of human life, man uses up his energy on .mental or physical work

Values

Various definitions have been presented for value, but the point they have in common

is usefulness; i.e, man makes something useful and gives it away in return for another useful thing. We do not agree with such a definition; each kind of value calls for a :separate, specific definition

Usage value: This form of value consists of the most useful materials that turn into -۱ :goods by means of work

This form of value, which changes certain materials into goods by means of work, involves the usefulness of the materials, due to their physical and\or chemical .qualities. With these qualities, the valuable subject fulfills man's needs and wishes

:This kind of value has three basic aspects

.a) Useful observable facts in materials, like physical or chemical characteristics

b) Limited things that have useful qualities. Things like air, sunrays, water and other plentiful natural objects, though useful and valuable, do not change into price or .value

c) The human aspect; materials and goods find value with regard to man. Social leaders should make efforts to separate and distinguish true, original values from those based on desires, whims and wishes. They should reinforce what is useful to human life so that greedy opportunists cannot produce

.goods that serve only to fulfill man's desires and wishes

Exchange value involves the price paid in return for work or goods received. This -۲ form of value is created with regard to factors such as demand, production, competition among producers, financial issues and other social matters, all of which .cause fluctuations in the values of work and goods

Innately justifying values: This form of value pertains to work people do in order to -۳ account for and justify themselves on their paths to achieve their individual or social :goals. These values can be categorized into two groups

a) Mental values – whether scientific, philosophical, artistic or ideological – that are necessary for adjusting the goals and ideals of the society, or cause evolutionary .progress in the society

b) Values justifying or accounting for compulsory affairs, such as education, group .management or social activities

Ultra-exchange value such as the value of mental work and activities done in order -۴ to make great human ideals and goals a reality. These values cannot be assessed with money. Many great endeavors have been made throughout history with the aim of making human values come true, without the people making the effort expecting . any money in return

Ownership

The phenomenon called ownership is one of the forms of man's relationship with objects. It can neither be observed externally nor by imagination. The most important element in the relationship of ownership is the free will and authority regarding the thing man owns. In other words, man must have the right to

do as he pleases with his belongings. Two factors, however, limit man's authority in defining his authority. First, natural forbiddances, and second, legal limitations, like .man is not allowed to use weapons in order to destroy others

Ownership is one of the phenomena that is not confined to fulfill man's needs. In other words, man does not regard it as merely a requirement-fulfilling phenomenon; it is one that can cast doubt and disorder in many principles. Sometimes ownership makes man's authority and free will regarding an object become absolute, and even eliminate others' authority and free will. Such affairs occur by means of the law. .Nowadays, legal powers take some people's authority away and exploit them

The Natural Roots of Ownership

:Personal ownership arises out of four main roots

Instinctive roots: Some thinkers believe that ownership is deeply rooted in man's -۱ instincts, and cannot be removed. In other words, man has “the tendency to gain power, authority and free will in progressing the life he desires or get total authority ”.to gain the things or material he wants

Purely mental roots: Some people believe that man's possession over his -۲ belongings is a side-effect of his possession over himself. When man owns something, he feels it is part of him, and those who believe man's mental possession over things is equal to his possession over himself are making a big mistake, for on one hand, possession of external objects is something conventional which occurs based on social credit, and on the other hand, any observable or non-observable thing

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man possesses can be transferred to others, whereas the human character cannot .be transacted or traded

The thing in common between man's possession over himself and over things is that since both take place due to God's will, God has set certain instructions for making use of things and ourselves. For example, with regard to his possession over himself, man must adjust his own character and avoid ruining it. Man must not oppose his own or others' characters; he must not disturb others' personalities. About possession of .things, man has been ordered not to become enslaved by the things he possesses

Purely natural roots: Some believe that man has to gain certain things and -۳ materials and use them in order to survive. He cannot use natural materials without making effort, and when he uses his physical or mental strength to do so, he feels he .owns the materials

The necessity for realizing and identifying situations: If man does not have -۴ ownership over things, his relationship with them will wither, and no individual's

.standing in the society can be strengthened

Possession is an instinctive issue, and by instinct here we mean man's tendency toward gaining authority and freedom in order to achieve an intelligible life. Man innately feels that he has to make effort and endeavor in order to survive and go on with his life. Thus, the first and third of the reasons mentioned above are in fact the .same, and the fourth is nullified

In fact, the tendency to gain

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power and authority and the freedom to use it is deeply rooted in man. Many thinkers have also emphasized on this point; however, they have not realized that such a tendency is two-sided – there is no certain, clear-cut factor in man that can create the same effect in all circumstances. In fact, this tendency pertains to man himself. In other words, the effects this tendency can make are related to the two contradictory .selves (egos) in man – the natural and the ideal

If a desired life is regarded as solely being accounted for according to the "natural self," the above mentioned tendency will be moving toward gaining better possessions for the purely natural life. Not only possession, but even thought, reasoning and all of man's external and internal activities will be at the service of the .natural ego

When making use of power and authority in regard to natural life, man faces two :kinds of activities

a) activities that pertain only to man – personal activities. One may use his power and free will to become a good poet, for example. He will drown in his own thoughts and .imaginations, and his poetry will only serve to satisfy his natural ego

b) kind of activities pertains to others; they may even endanger the life or freedom of .other people, like using power and authority in order to dominate others

If man's life becomes gaining possession of everything – in other words, if the ideal of his natural self is set as expanding his

belongings – he will endanger others' lives and freedom. If man has an ideal self (ego), however, all of his external or internal activities will become the means instead of being the end; for such a man, ownership will only serve as the means to gain his requirements in life. Those who focus upon ownership as the goal are not owners; in fact, they are enslaved by what they possess.

The Limitation of Personal Ownership

There are three reasons why personal ownership is limited:

۱- God has created whatever there is in the universe for man, and has also instructed man how to make use of it. Of course, what God has created belongs to all people, and man can learn to use it only through work and effort. And since each individual's work and effort is limited, man's possession will also be limited.

۲- Not only does the principle of work and endeavor prove that man's ownership is limited, even if man or a society succeeds in possessing all the usable material in the world, it would require some people to stay alive and some others to die, or the lives of some to be at the mercy of few others, which leaves no choice but to accept limited ownership.

۳- Religious commands ordering man not to disturb others' lives, avoid co emption or being usurious, prohibit the production or trade of harmful goods, prohibit monopoly, avoid making a corner in gold or silver, and control the society's economy.

Also, the Qur’an tells us to safeguard values from absolute

destruction, whether regarding work or goods; this again shows that possession is limited.

و لا تبخسوا الناس اشيائهم

(Do not decrease the value people's work really has." (۱۱:۸۵, ۷:۸۵, ۲۶:۸۳"

Unity among People

Unity among mankind is one of the most significant issues of the humanities and the arts. If these two fields do not take any action on this issue, they will not have done anything for mankind at all. On the other hand, Thomas Hobbes has said, Men are like wolves to each other." He saw no unity among human beings at all. But knowledge of man's various aspects and positive and negative talents and potentials makes the humanities and the arts to "make effort toward creating the sacred feeling of .intelligible unity and harmony among human beings

One of the duties of various arts, especially literature in the form of prose and poetry, is paving the path toward achieving human unity. Man has attempted to reach unity among mankind by means of religion and reason; now it is the arts' turn to take serious action, and use its various forms in order to motivate people's feelings on the .path toward creating unity between human beings

If unity is to be achieved, we must first make people realize the necessity of unity among people. Artists can use their works to serve this cause, and show how people are affected by each other's joys or sorrows, thus proving the need for harmony and mutual sympathy. Artists can show others the heartfelt tranquility the people

who help others relieve their pains and suffering feel. They can also motivate people toward taking steps toward elevating each other by showing the relation between :actions and reactions in their works. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) says

این جهان کوه است و فعل ما ندا سوی ما آید نداها را صدا

(This world is like a mountain, and our actions like the shouting toward that mountain; .they are echoed back to us)

Not even a single step can be taken toward making people realize the necessity of unity among people – and then creating that unity – unless the anti-human thoughts .of figures like Machiavelli, Hobbes, Nietzsche and Freud are disregarded and nullified

The Various Forms of Unity

:There different kinds of unity are

Numerical Unity: Such a form of unity cannot acceptably be applied to human - ۱ .beings, for man is far beyond a numerical unit

:Natural Unity: There are two forms of natural unity -۲

a) Human beings' natural characteristics: All human beings have forces and aspects such as reason, intelligence, imagination and abstraction, which provide a form of unity among them with regard to these natural characteristics. But this kind of unity is incapable of bringing people together, for throughout history, people have been aware of these points they have in common, but they have still shown a great deal of .brutal atrocities toward each other

b) Unity in issues such as race, natural environments, social life and history: This form of unity is more effective than the former

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in attracting people toward unity. For example, ethnic unity has been able to bring people from the same ethnic background closer to each other, sometimes even .making them ready to fight other races for their lives

.Most of such forms of unity are abused, and they are often put to use destructively

Self-preservation: Sometimes people unite in order to save their own lives or get rid -۳ of disturbances. This form of harmony is merely due to fear of harm, and is thus unstable. It has no innate value, for this harmony lies in the need to escape harm and .gain advantage, like when conquerors attack

The Factor that Saturates Emotions: Some people see the origin of unity lying in -۴ seeing the pains of others, and feeling sympathy for them. Such a feeling, if raw and undeveloped, will wane when we see the atrocities some other people commit; if the feeling arises out of supreme understanding and pure reason and intelligence, .however, it will prove extremely valuable

The Law of Actions and Reactions: The fact that any action leads to a reaction can -۵ be a factor helping to arouse unity among human beings. Many Iranian poets have :put this concept under emphasis in their works. As Nasser Khusro says

عیسی به رهی دید یکی کشته فتاده حیران شد و بگرفت به دندان سر انگشت

گفتا که که را کشتی؟ تا کشته شدی زار تا باز کجا کشته

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شود آن که تو را کشت

انگشت مکن رنجه به درکوفتن کس تا کس نکند رنجه به درکوفتنت مشت

One day, Jesus saw a dead man lying on the ground. Shocked, Jesus bit his finger and) said, 'who did you kill that made someone else kill you, and now I wonder how your killer will be killed. Indeed, never raise a finger to hurt someone, or someone else will ('.raise his fist to hurt you in return

The Factors Influencing Unity in Intelligible Life

The five factors mentioned above provide the preliminary background necessary for gaining knowledge and realizing the necessity of unity among human beings. Achieving unity calls for higher motives so that human beings feel united in their :intelligible life. These factors are

Sound sense and reason: If common sense and reason are free of short- - ۱ mindedness and advantage-seeking, human beings can realize how valuable unity, .equality and brotherhood among them can be

.Morals: High human moral ethics can also help people reach unity and brotherhood -٢

The delicate feeling that is beyond obligation: There is very delicate feeling inside -٣ pure human beings which is far superior to moral factors and makes man see human life from a much more elevated viewpoint, and consider respecting it as totally necessary. Iranian literature shows this feeling in various ways. As the renowned ,Iranian poet, Sa'adi says

به جان زنده دلان سعدیا که ملک وجود نیرزد آن که دلی را ز خود بیازاری

I swear, O)

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Sa'adi, on the lives of all the pure-hearted, that this worldly life is not worth you (.hurting others

Religion: When following religion, man has the attraction toward divine evolution, -۴ and has an extreme feeling of unity for his fellow human beings. With religion, man's inside is purified of all immoral, so he can understand other human beings' joys and sorrows, and achieve greater human unity. As religion sees it, there are twelve different forms of unity among people that can help build up extreme unity among :them. They are

a) Unity and equality in relationship with the Creator: All human beings have been (created by one God.(The Greeks, ۳۰:۴۰

(b) Unity in God's will which created man to worship Him. (The Scatterers, ۵۱:۵۶

c) Unity and equality among people in the fact that they all deserve to have divinity (breathed into them. (Muhammad, ۳۲:۹

d) Unity in the material man is created of: all human beings are created out of earth. ((El-Hijr, ۱۵:۲۶

e) Unity in the origin of creation: All human beings come from the same ancestors.

((Women, ۴:۱

f) Unity in innate greatness and dignity: God has created human beings in a way that (they all have innate dignity. (The Night Journey, ۱۷:۷۰

g) Unity among people in gaining merit-based dignity: All human beings are capable of (gaining great dignity by means of piety.(The Apartments, ۴۹:۱۳

h) Unity in human characteristics and qualities: All of mankind has reason, intelligence, (conscience, etc. (The Resurrection, ۷۵:۲

i) Unity in natural aims and goals: The goals people have in

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their lives either pertain to their natural lives or their desired ones; the axis to both is .self-preservation

j) Unity in the basics of divine religions: All divine religions are based upon man's .innate tendency and disposition toward God, and have many points in common

(k) Unity in having the seeds of knowledge and mysticism inside. (The Cow, ۲:۳۱

l) Unity in setting natural, descriptive or any other laws needed for adjusting man's natural or mental life. If man is to achieve unity, he must consider the grounds that can make unity a reality. The principles and facts common between man and the .universe mentioned above are of the most important of the grounds needed

:Furthermore, three other significant points must also be kept in mind

- We must increase people's knowledge to such an extent that they understand what supreme unity means. Unfortunately, only the most elementary of steps have been .taken so far in order to achieve supreme unity among human souls

- People must be taught that although man has the potential to make this unity come true deep in his innate, activating and flourishing it calls for freeing oneself from the

natural self and entering intelligible life, which is feasible through gaining divine .manners and morals

Arts contribute to making this come true. Poetry can motivate people. If responsible • artists make endeavors toward motivating unity, not only will art itself become more .valuable, but also social and political evolution will occur

Differences among People

The differences and disagreements people have can be categorized

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:into two main groups

Natural differences and disagreements -۱

Artificial differences and disagreements -۲

:There are three kinds of natural differences and disagreements

a) Natural differences between people in understanding and realizing realities: For example, people may make errors in using their senses and misunderstand realities. Such disagreements lie in differences in their sensory and mental structures. .Hereditary factors can also lead to such differences

b) Differences and disagreements due to environmental conditions and man's .approach to them

c) Differences and disagreements due to scientific knowledge: People differ in their .acquisition of knowledge and experiences

The three forms of differences and disagreements mentioned above are natural and necessary, cause no disturbance for man's individual or social life. If considered in a logical and calculated fashion, they can help human evolution and development; otherwise, however, they will lead to thoughts like those of Epicurus, Machiavelli, .Thomas Hobbes and Nietzsche, which conflict with intelligible human life

:Artificial differences and disagreements can be categorized as

a) Differences and disagreements due to lack of control on self-opportunism and advantage-seeking: Although advantage-seeking has natural roots, it can endanger human life if it gets out of hand. If people do not harness and control their desires and .wishes, there will be a harmful, artificial difference or disagreement

b) Differences and disagreements due to social classifications: Ethnic and national differences among peoples are examples of this. Social leaders can make use of these differences in the most atrocious of ways, or in the best and most educating .fashion, too

If man succeeds in correctly developing and educating

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his own mind and soul, he will see disputes as owing to merely seeing different colors and shapes instead of seeing the real truth. Some thinkers, including Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi believe that all disputes and disagreements are due to man's own :stubbornness and spiritual deviation from the right path

در معانی اختلاف و در صور روز و شب بین خار و گل سنگ و گهر

تا ز زهر و از شکر درنگذری کی تو از گلزار وحدت بو بری

وحدت اندر وحدت است این مثنوی از سمک رو تا سماک ای معنوی

Differences occur both in meanings and in appearances. For instance, consider the) how day differs from night, or how worthless pebbles are different from gems and diamonds. You will never be able to appreciate the unity existent in the universe unless you step beyond apparent things like bitter and sweet... the Mathnavi you see is filled with unity and harmony – it bonds truths – O mystic man, with this book you (.can rise from the earth and reach the heavens

We cannot not agree with Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi here, for on one hand, the sense of unity-seeking is one of the most important ideals of human life; it is this

sense that has led to the birth of many philosophical schools of thought, and many philosophers have

.claimed to have considered unity of thought in their spiritual basics

On the other hand, there is a great difference between the two facts "all disputes among human beings are baseless and there is unity above all schools of thought" ".and "from natural opposites we can extract a greater unit

On the whole, there are two forms of differences and disagreements that must be ;taken into consideration

۱- Differences on thoughts and ideas: If logically used, these disputes can prove quite .useful

۲- Differences arising from one's interpretation of the truth about the universe: This is .where various schools of thought and scholars differ

The Principle of the Mutual Necessity of Unity and Diversity

There is a principle in the humanities stating that first, no theorem can achieve total agreement without there being some points of disagreement on it. For instance, the issue that human life has two phenomena called joy and pain is generally agreed upon among thinkers; however, there is a great deal of debate upon what joy and pleasure is, what pain and suffering is, and what should be done when these two collide. Secondly, there will be no disagreement on an issue unless there are basics about it which are agreeable. For example, although there is dispute on whether members of the society have individual freedom or not, it is agreed that man has to .live socially, and likes freedom

This is called the principle of mutual necessity between unity and disagreement. Let :us elaborate on it via the following points

۱- Man is not an individual; humanity consists of many people,

.who do not think the same about all issues

The universe has numerous evolving creatures, and each human being can only -۲ .reach a certain level of the truth about them

No human being can achieve absolute knowledge of man and the universe. The -۳ .universe always spreads a compound scene of light and dark before man's mind

What develops human societies is the open path of identification and knowledge, -۴ .which is feasible through great minds

If everything were understandable immediately for all human beings, human life would be destroyed in its very early stages, for there would be no more contradicting ideas that could lead to human effort, and activate man's development. As Jalal-addin ,Muhammad Molawi says

قبله جان را چو پنهان کرده‌اند هر کسی رو جانبی آورده‌اند

Since the main path and direction toward the truth – God – is hidden, people have) (.taken various paths

And if the 'focus of life,' i.e. the absolute goal, were revealed to all, or if everyone -۵ had unified knowledge in order to choose their tools and means of reaching the goal, .there would be no effort or endeavor toward the goal at all

Nature is related with the supernatural. If we are to discover the former, we should -۶ unveil the latter. Only few can truly know nature, for its total discovery needs .supernatural understanding

Dispute among experts is one of the most common issues in knowledge. Diverse ideas and beliefs have always existed, and have even led to the development

and evolution of thoughts. As far as such disputes do not cause any harm to the "basic common principles of belief," they are quite necessary. The interpretation of some of the main and minor principles of the religion has in most cases added to the profundity of Islamic philosophical and scholastic studies. Generally, these disputes :can be categorized into two groups

Intelligible disputes: These disputes originate from the information relevant to - ١ various subjects, potentials and different perceptions, like disagreements in perceiving facts about the universe, which leads to various scientific and philosophical viewpoints. This is why great scholars of Islam, both Shiite and Sunnites, have produced treatises and criticisms of each other's' works. Mulla Ali Qushji, for instance, has added side notes to Khajeh Nasir's book Tajreed-ol-e'teqad, and Mulla Mohsen Fayz has done the same for Qazali's Ehya-ol-uloomIntelligible disputes can help .develop both theoretical and practical domains

Unintelligible disputes: These disputes arise out of deviational, illegal factors, like - ٢ disputes owing to desires and lusts. Throughout history, some people pretending to be advocates of freedom of thought – who were, in fact, greedy for fame or power – have presented ideas that have led to unintelligible disputes. Unintelligible disputes .are passive and superficial, for they are based upon desires for fame or power

The Various Forms of Unity

:Several forms of unity can exist in the framework of religion

Absolute unity: Agreement concerning all knowledge, religious decrees and beliefs. - ١ Taking into consideration the freedom of thought and reasoning and the diversity in people's understanding potentials, such a

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unity is impossible. The disputes thinkers have in their ideas and information on various issues, and also their differences in intelligence, memory and comprehension .contradict the concept of absolute unity

Unity caused by external elements: This form of unity is a result of factors other -۲ than the truth and context of religion. Usually, when destructive, dangerous factors arise, the contradictions and disputes between various sects and religions are ignored, and unity somewhat forms between them. Such a unity is caused by .compulsory factors other than religion, which if removed, the unity will also vanish

Intelligible unity: Considering the freedom of thought and reasoning in -۳ implementing and choosing the reasons for the elements of religion, this form of unity is acceptable. It can be defined as: placing the general context of Abraham's religion for all societies to believe in, and removing personal, theoretical beliefs, local cultures and the characteristics and theories about the components of the religion which .relate to reasoning and individual or group brainstorming

This is the kind of unity great scholars of both groups of religious scholars have emphasized, not the one caused by external elements, which is quite baseless. In order to achieve intelligible unity, it is essential to make the viewpoints of Islamic thinkers vaster, and free them of the framework of illogical prejudices. Great thinkers like Farabi, Avicenna, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Muskuyeh, Ibn Heisam, Zachariah Razi, Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi), Mirdamad and Mollasadra have had such vastness of point of views, and that is why they

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.never fell for destructive disturbances and contradictions

Social Order and Cooperation

Any sound mind and aware conscience would approve of the necessity of order and discipline in individual and social life. Societies that lack an original culture, but follow order and discipline in various economic, political, legal and cultural aspects, enjoy more luxury and progress than societies that do not have order and discipline, even though they may have an original culture and economic, political, legal and cultural .laws and principles

:The problems that arise in the absence of social order and discipline are

.a) No individual or group will know where they stand socially

b) Everyone would seek their own benefit, considering others as both the means and .the end

.c) Nobody would pay any attention to what is to the society's benefit

.d) People would not be content with their legal rights

.e) In such societies, human conscience heads for doom

The Principles of Social Order and Cooperation

Religious, moral, political, and legal basics are the most important motives for social participation. Pioneer culture has put a great deal of emphasis upon people's social :harmony and participation. The reasons we find for this in the Qur’an are

Verses in the Qur’an that invite people to socially cooperate and create the proper -۱ .(grounds for social life, like (The Table, ۵:۲

Verses that condemn disharmony and lack of unity, and emphasize the importance -۲ .(of collaboration and cooperation, like (The House of Imran, ۳:۱۰۳

.There are also many hadith on the necessity and effect of social participation -۳

يدالله مع الجماعه

".God's hand is with the public unity“

Other hadith show the importance -۴

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.of the community

من اصبح و لم يهتم باموور المسلمين فليس بمسلم

He who wakes up in the morning without caring about the lives of other Muslims is“

".not a Muslim

Moral ethics are another basic factor in social harmony and participation. Moral ethics makes people observe social law and order for the sake of human values rather than force. If these two points are taken into consideration, moral virtues will be regarded :as pillars of social harmony

۱ – Knowledge of how great man is, and how valuable it is to help solve people's .problems

۲ – The will and determination to do proper deeds that the conscience also approves .of

If people's cooperation and participation does not aim to make social benefits come true, eliminate factors disturbing social life which is based upon religion and divine .conscience, it will not be different from the cooperation seen in ants and bees

Without making effort toward cooperation and physically and mentally endeavoring to adjust a social life based upon religion and divine conscience, it will not be considered valuable, even if it does produce outstanding results in providing advantages and benefits for the society; bees and ants also cooperate and work hard together, but that arises out of their specifically compulsory animal instinct, and has .no value

Power and Right

Right: Generally all necessary or useful realities that have innate or clear poles are called right. The realities about the world outside and the essential rules governing it ,are part of rights. So are all values useful to man, like justice, freedom

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development, the sense of responsibility and social laws. Anything that causes corruption or destruction, on the other hand, is the opposite of righteousness. Each :right has two poles

١- The obvious, clear pole: Realities that are necessary and useful to man. They really exist, regardless of how man makes contact with them, like the realities and facts about the universe. The obvious, clear pole includes all the laws and properness man needs for an intelligible life.

٢- The innate pole: By "innate" here we mean man's existence against inhuman realities; in other words, we are referring to the human side of righteousness. This pole must always accompany the former one.

Studying the verses in the Qur'an can guide us to these conclusions on righteousness:

- The foundation of the universe is right. Righteousness depends upon God's will, which no one can ever destroy. If man, in a balanced, sound state of mind, understands the meaning of righteousness, he will have respect for it.

- Rights are stable and sustainable; evil and wrong, however, fade away like foam on water.

- Righteousness is the cornerstone of the universe, and using it calls for human effort; man must reach evolution based upon righteous principles. By means of intelligence and reason, conscience, prophets and men of wisdom, God shows us what the right is.

- Tendency toward righteousness and acting thus requires upbringing and education. Righteousness cannot be provided to people automatically; human beings should consciously, voluntarily aim to follow righteousness as their evolutionary goal.

-

Man should not rush for achieving righteousness. They should not imagine that the right is at all times achievable.

- Man must realize that any kind of effort aiming to uphold and bring about righteousness is a part of the right, and the greater the effort made is, the more man

.makes progress in the direction of righteousness

Man needs to make serious effort if he is to reach righteousness and perform • actions based on what is right; he must realize that the right-based realities of the universe do not obey we human beings' lusts and desires. Righteousness, the factor .that promotes human evolution, needs action and effort on man's behalf

God's will tends toward the wrong and evil being destroyed and the right prevailing • .successfully. The lust-infatuated cannot defeat righteousness

Power: Power is the factor causing motion and change in various forms. Power is one of the realities of the universe which influences man and the universe both, for power is the natural changer and acting factor effecting man and the universe in various .forms. Thus, power is an example of righteousness

Now the question comes up: power or righteousness – which is the dominant :conqueror? There are two theories in response

Some people believe that righteousness will always succeed, and the powerful will -۱ never be able to defeat it. They believe that man's intelligible life has appropriate and valuable elements that are righteous. Responsibility, freedom and moderating .selfishness are real, and they are right

Some others believe that -۲

power is the winner; righteousness, they believe, is a mental ideal that cannot withstand power. History also provides many cases in which power overcomes .righteousness

Righteousness never confronts power at all. Power is itself one of the rights that motivate the universe and mankind. The question whether power will overcome or righteousness is a trivial, illogical one. Righteousness shows how false, improper and worthless the wrong is rather than conflict with power which is right itself. When man

gains power, he can change it into a constructive factor or abuse it and use it destructively. Men's deviation from righteousness makes power – a factor necessary .for development and construction – be misused

Power is the unconscious reality that is – from the aspect that it is the basic cause for all changes and movements – an example of righteousness; thus, it neither wins nor loses, for when power unconsciously destroys the resistance of a creature, it does not feel joy by hearing the creature fall and break. It does not regard this as a victory. It is man, however, who abuses power; man even treats his own mere existence as a .plaything, too

The most lethal factor endangering power is the feeling of absolute, independent power. Accompanied with imagination and induction, this feeling prevents power from gaining a logical, accurate calculation, and eventually brings about the powerful person's demise. Absolute power leads to inflatedness and rebelling against realities. This is why it is the feeling of absolute power and all its imaginations that

(the Qur'an condemns, not power itself. (۹۶:۶

The power-greedy, who lust for controlling people's lives, had better realize that they are in fact drinking a cup of poison. Those who become playthings in the hands of the powerful and oppress the weak are no different, either. Losing one's right to live at the hands of the powerful has been, however, one of the most painful phenomena history has witnessed. The powerful have always tended to create such a corrupt state of minds in those they have crushed that these poor downtrodden souls regard .them as saviors

In fact, those people who surrender to the powerful have downtrodden their own character; no power can defeat man unless he himself breaks his own character first. The human character is a forbidden zone into which only God and man himself can .find a way into; no one else is able to enter it

As we have already mentioned, righteousness is far superior to success or failure. Power is a reality that may fall in the hands of righteousness or selfish people. Now let :us see what will happen in either case

Power in the hands of selfish man

If power falls into the hands of those who have been overwhelmed by their :selfishness, the consequences are

Since the identity of the power itself is unaware and aimless, its attraction will - ۱ .destroy the power-greedy

Those intoxicated with power lose all their freedom and free will, for power is the - ۲ motive that, by means of its false promises of absolute freedom, presses every element of

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the character of the power-greedy person inside his aimless, ignorant nature, and every change he undergoes will be merely going though one fatalistic phase into .another

.The power-greedy defy others in order to establish their own existence -۳

The power-greedy attempt to make everyone else their slaves in order to saturate -۴ .their authoritarian desires; if they do not find anyone to do so, they will feel despair

When the power-greedy face each other, they neutralize their potentials and add -۵ to the darkness of their beings instead of becoming aware of their hidden potentials .and being guided to the path of intelligible life

The power-greedy are too selfish to take unexpected, uncalculated events into - ۶ consideration, and that is why they are destroyed, just like Napoleon was destroyed .by a black cloud at Waterloo

The greed for power is not sweet enough to compensate for the bitterness of its - ۷

demise. When one drowns into the attraction of power, all of his logical calculations disappear, so the power he acquires will be no more than an inflated natural self. The joys of the power-greedy are not original or pure; when power gradually falls, a .tremendous bitterness will engulf him

When power arises, it pours baseless hallucinations and illusions into the personality of the power-greedy person, and inflates it; when power goes, all the elements of his character are awaken, and they make him see how futile power was. This is why we can say that there is no fall as painful in

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this world as the fall of the powerful. The mental suffering they undergo when their .power disappears is truly unimaginable

The power-greedy consider power – an unconscious picture of unconscious - ۸ phenomena and facts – as the authentic image of awareness, freedom and law. They .see the criteria for any good or evil in power

The power-greedy ignore the relativity of power. They do not realize that power - ۹ .may be influenced by time or unexpected events

The power-greedy are slaves of power; thus, they always think that they can - ۱۰ .preserve their power with awareness and will

Power in developed man

If power and authority is given to human beings who have overcome their :selfishness, the consequences will be

These human beings know that they should increase their awareness. They feel it - ۱ necessary to have more knowledge and alertness if they want to fulfill their .responsibilities flawlessly

Though having power and authority, developed characters always feel themselves - ۲ incapable, for they know that God is the absolute owner of life, so even the slightest

.mistake of theirs is considered by them as an unforgivable sin

Since developed man has self-control, he seldom falls under the compulsory – ۳
.pressures of authority

If developed man makes a mistake using his authority, he will feel deep sorrow and –۴
.repentance

Since developed man takes intellectual and conscientious calculations into – ۵
consideration in order to use his power and authority, he has no fear of unexpected events. His high aim helps him avoid misusing his power. Such a human being sees power as a means

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to create harmony, order and an intelligible life. He knows well that power is not so
.absolute as to keep him safe from fall or doom

.If such a man loses his power, he will not feel sorry or upset at all –۶

A Study of History

point

No event or change in man's social or personal life takes place haphazardly or incidentally. There is no question that the balance of energy throughout the world is completely orderly. Here we are concerned with how strongly laws and rules
:dominate human life and its various aspects. Let us first consider these three theories

Living within a closed circle of laws and rules, man is confined to strictly obey them –۱
in his social and personal life. Thus, he is just like other creatures or animals, following
.a predefined set of rules for his life

Human life is totally different from other living beings, and man cannot be – ۲
considered as imprisoned inside the laws of the universe, for man is quite distinct in his ability to think, choose and decide, and many others. Therefore, the history of

.mankind cannot be interpreted by means of a fixed set of laws

The various aspects of man's existence is influenced by man's interactions with the -۳ events around him throughout his life, just as a grain of wheat develops by interacting with different factors around it. If the grain were put in a system free of natural laws, where it could be affected by unlimited factors, we would undoubtedly be unable to

predict what were to happen to it. Likewise the destiny of man is an entirely open .system, where he is affected by various factors

Since man is gifted with intelligence, authority and many other characteristics, he can never be confined in a closed system, and his fate will thus be certainly unpredictable. No intellectual has ever been able to accurately foresee his own or his society's futures by means of concretely scientific information, for there are so many unpredictable events in man's life that any foreseeing is impossible. We must keep in mind, however, that though man's existence is quite open, and his being influenced by various factors should not contradict with his absolute domination over himself and .the world he lives in

As we have already seen, some scholars believe man to be entirely imprisoned by the fatalistic factors of history, and consider human beings totally incapable of freeing themselves from the chains of laws controlling their existence. Let us consider how :they are mistaken from two points of view

a) Seeing history as a series of events, in which a large number of people are affected by natural factors and other people, is just like considering them as completely helpless. Sometimes powerful tyrants make such slaves out of the meek, drowning them in pain, that it seems as if true freedom and independent character is a luxury .only the elite can enjoy

,b) Incorrect generalizations can bring about errors in the philosophy of history

for some intellectuals interpret all aspects of human life on the basis of one or a few of their selected factors. For example, a group of researchers have concluded from studying the history of various societies that the fundamentals of social life in some communities are compatible with racism. They not only associate these societies with racism, but also try to expand it for all societies of the world. Those who tend to interpret history by forcing one or a few factors do not realize that you need not know the cause in order to know its effect, but if one knows everything about a cause, .knowing its effect will follow

?What Is the Philosophy of History

The philosophy of history studies the causes and consequences of historical events and changes. One basic question here is whether studying the philosophy of all of history is possible, or should history be studied era by era. Some scholars believe it is .possible to achieve the entire philosophy of the collective history of man

Their theory was criticized on the fact that we cannot create a collective history for a history that occurs only once. We must keep in mind, however, that historical components are not in total conflict with each other, and have many points in common. For instance, if the leaders of a society prove atrocious, the people will be ready for mutiny and revolt. Another common point is that economic failures lead to .stagnancy in human lives

A significant point in the philosophy of history is that

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there is no conflict between history being consisted of parts and fragments and at the .same time having orderly, systematic components

Causality in History

Some scientists believe that it is not possible to account for history on the basis of causality, for man makes history, and as a conscious, free being, man cannot be explained by means of causality. However, there are a few points concerning this

:belief that we must keep in mind

Despite man's freedom of will, he cannot entirely eliminate causality. Although he is -١ able to affect historical events with his knowledge, he cannot make annihilate what exists, or vice versa. The more man activates his talents and the more knowledge he acquires, his freedom of choice will also broaden, and stronger he will be in manipulating the causality of causes and the motivation of motives. Man's free will is in no conflict with the role of causality in history, as it does not contradict the fact that .some laws dominate his mental, spiritual state and his movements

Some others, on the other hand, consider unexpected events as a reason to rule out causality in history. They believe, for example, the black cloud that caused the heavy rain in Waterloo and Napoleon's defeat as a contradiction of causality. They have obviously neglected the distinction between events that happen unexpectedly and events that happen with no reason. Even though Napoleon couldn't predict the rain, .the movement of the clouds and the rain were not without reason

The most important – and the most -٢

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delicate – point in understanding the philosophy of history is distinguishing the sequence of events and the cause and effect relationship between them. If and event follows another, it does not necessarily imply that the former caused the latter to happen. Many historical events have occurred one after another without any making .the next one take place

?Is History Motivated Internally or Externally

:There are two theories on what causes all historic events

There is no external cause for historical events. Any incident or development in -١ history is caused by what has happened before it, and is itself the cause of future .events. No outside factor can play a role in history

Historical events are, despite being influenced by causality, also affected by the - ۲ supernatural. As everything else in the universe, what happens in history is under .God's control

Historical events altogether, like other phenomena in the world, do not originate from their own internal components and relationships, for the components and relationships themselves are bound by the same laws that do not originate from their own innate self; the laws governing the components and relationships of the universe .do not originate from their innate self, either

Since every component and relationship in history and the universe is undergoing change but the laws governing it are fixed, the origin of the laws must be something other than the universe or history. Therefore, history – whether that of mankind or .the nonmaterial – must be motivated by things beyond historical changes

Accepting a factor other than historical events as the

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motivating reason for history does not contradict the laws governing history, just as accepting that certain laws govern the universe does not conflict with the divinely nominative role. Or the fact that the laws governing the material aspects of the human body are not at odds with the laws governing man's mental and psychological .aspects

However, the movement of the human body organs follows physical and physiological laws, but does at the same time originate from man's will and decision, which does not fit into the laws of physical muscular movement. This is why we say when an intellectual accepts the fact that history follows laws, it is the same as accepting that history has a spirit, a soul, different from historical changes and events themselves. Some intellectuals have elegantly used the term "the conscience of history" instead of .the "spirit of history" – the ultimate of an issue, quite different from a person

?Is There a Single Motivating Reason for History

If we mean by the motivating reason for history its true nominator, which would obviously mean the One God. However, if we are referring to the ultimate end for history – where history is heading for – even if such an end exists, it is impossible to discover using scientific and philosophical methods, for history as a whole, made up of various events and changes, it has no will or knowledge of its own to make it able to search for and move towards its goal. In other words, even of all of history does possess a

single truth, it is unlikely for these human beings who can act with awareness and foresee its future completely. However, as a being living in history itself, man can .predict the future to a limited, conditional extent

Basically, in order to find out whether history is motivated by only one reason or more, we must take into consideration the identity of history – is the identity of history a single reality that we should designate a motivating reason for, or does the variety of historical events and changes prevent us from reaching a sole reality for it? In fact, by considering the following components as the identity of history, we will see that it .cannot be regarded a single reality

۱- Man's effort toward providing himself with a suitable life,

۲- man's endeavors to discover the world he lives in,

۳- the love and affection man uses to justify his own life,

۴- building the tools he needs to survive,

۵- making laws and rights that make social life possible,

۶- the influence of outstanding figures in history,

۷- devastating wars,

۸- cruel rivalries,

,inventions and discoveries -۹

,the resistance great men show against the selfish -۱۰

,the rise and fall of cultures -۱۱

,the rise and fall of civilizations -۱۲

,the effect of natural disasters upon human life -۱۳

,the conflicts and confrontation among human beings -۱۴

The above-mentioned factors affecting history are in so much contrast with each other that it is impossible to find something in common between them and reach the single reality that can be the reason of historical components and

.elements

The Necessity of Distinguishing the Necessary Factors from the Determining Factors in History

To explain the importance of making a clear distinction between these two factors, we must take the phenomenon called life into consideration from these two points of :view

The factors necessary without which life cannot go on, such as breathing, eating, -۱ .sleep and health

The factors determining the quality of man's life, like poverty or wealth, science and -۲ .knowledge, success and failures, courage and cowardice

The first kind of factors makes it possible for human life to continue, but the second kind provides human life with a specific quality. Rather like human life, the history of :mankind too possesses these two factors

a) The factor necessary for making the components and elements of history, which are the natural and psychological reasons behind historical changes and events. The reason why man began agriculture, for instance, was that he could not live without cereal and farm products for food. Human beings built houses and dams, or began mining to make it possible for their own life to go on. Economic activities, setting laws and enforcing social responsibilities, executing the necessary policies for human life have also originated from such factors. These factors, necessary for making historical .events, cannot describe the quality of history

b) There are a few points we must consider before we can discuss the factors :determining the quality of history

Considering man's identity and characteristics, the factor determining the quality of • human life is the "ideal me", or the "ideal ego", which is the base of all aspects of human

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life. If man's ideal ego likes wealth and money, he will see everyone and everything from that point of view. A beautiful work of art will be valuable to him only because it costs a lot of money. Or if someone loves power, he will see everyone as something .he should dominate

The factor determining the quality of man's social life differs from his individual life. • This factor is so important that it can be the most effective way to identify the .determining factors underlying historical events

:There are two distinct qualities in social life •

.a) The primary quality, which includes the necessary elements of life

b) The secondary quality, which includes the human relationships, social relationships, .cultures, ways of thinking, ideals, lifestyles and various values

The basic factor in the primary factor of social life is the necessity of harmonizing and

:moderating people's wills. There are two types of will harmony

a) Forced moderation, which results in forced harmony, has unfortunately existed in .most societies throughout history

.b) Natural moderation, which causes natural harmony among people

:The factors that can bring about natural harmony among people are

.Sharing duties and jobs is a necessity in social life, and can harmonize people's wills -۱

The only kind of ownership possible is social life is limited ownership, for unlimited -۲ .ownership can cause disturbance and trouble among the people

Two phenomena that have roots in man's self-loving quality, and are important to -۳ natural human life are the attraction to pleasure and escaping pain. They also influence controlling

wills. These two phenomena motivate the most important of man's activities, and history cannot be interpreted without considering them. The principle of protecting oneself (self-love, in other words) has guided man toward gaining benefits and .avoiding pain throughout all of history

Social laws can also moderate human selfishness, especially when they are - ۴ .compatible with man's true nature

.Attention toward the divine tradition according to which cruelty is mortal -۵

.The above items must be considered when discussing historical events

Various Viewpoints on the Factors Motivating History

Scholars have presented different theories on what motivates history. Let us take a :look at some of them

۱- Human nature

۲- Natural, e.g. geographical, factors

۳- Political factors

۴- Power, which Nietzsche strongly advocated

۵- Geniuses and influential figures

۶- The hidden factor that draws societies into different fates. This idea was presented by Spengler.

۷- Extraterrestrial factors: ancient people believed that other planets influence and control all human aspects

۸- The absolute idea presented by Hegel

۹- Economic phenomena

۱۰- The will of life, as seen in Schopenhauer's philosophy

۱۱- General intelligible life, which is superior to natural events. Bergson presented this idea.

۱۲- Sedimentary ideas, like inheritance, as suggested by Gustav le Bon.

۱۳- The increase and density of population

۱۴- Sexual instinct, which Freud supported

۱۵- Original social ideas, as suggested by Whitehead

۱۶- Fortune

۱۷- Love and hatred, suggested by Empedocles' philosophy

۱۸- Truth-seeking and ambition for greatness

Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions -۱۹

Religion -۲۰

:We believe these three factors to be the most significant in motivating history

- God
- Man
- What is useful to man

God: God's influence on history is the same as God's -۱

influence on other natural phenomena. The elements of history, from man to the pyramids of Egypt, carved stones, transcribed tablets, every one of man's physical or .mental accomplishments which inform us about the past, are all created by God

On the other hand, all thoughts, wills, decisions, discoveries, achievements, great leaps forward and the activation of potentials – which make up history – refer to God. Even man's chosen activities and theirs observable effects – may it be, at times, .disabilities – also originate from God

:This piece of poetry by the Iranian poet Anvari shows a very clear historical trend

اگر محوّل حال جهانیان نه قضاست چرا مجاری احوال بر خلاف رضاست

بلی قضاست به هر نیک و بد عنان کش خلق بدآن دلیل که تدبیرهای جمله خطاست

هزار نقش برآرد زمانه و نبود یکی چنانکه در آیینه تصور ماست

(If the events and developments of the world are not based on destiny, how come they are not always to our satisfaction? Indeed, it is fate that controls the good or evil; all speculations about it are false. Time goes a thousand ups and downs, but not even one of them can we predict.)

Man: Ever since history began, there have been human beings – whether rulers or -۲ outstanding figures – who have influenced their own and others' fate. Man's mental and physical power and achievements has shown throughout history how significantly

his role has been. If man were truly imprisoned in his natural or social surroundings, he would never be able to step out of his caves and explore the oceans or outer space. Those who ignore the role of human thought and will in history are unintentionally ridiculing man; although man does affect history, it cannot be exactly .evaluated qualitatively or quantitatively

Since human life – whether individual or social – and even the society and nature are open systems, the fate of their components cannot be accurately qualitatively or quantitatively determined. This is the reason why significant historical events, like the rise and fall of cultures and civilizations, are always expressed with a range of .probability

Man's will power and thought has been able to recognize his real ideals, ends and tools in any period of history, and take action to acquire them, and he has been successful at times and unsuccessful at other times. The important point in man's role in shaping history is that God has enabled him to dominate history, and understand .and cooperate in harmony with his fellow beings

What Is Useful to Man: What remains in history is what is useful to man. However, -۳ what is useful to man must also be in accordance with the fundamentals of human .life

انزل من السماء ماء فسالت اوديه بقدرها فاحتمل السيل زبدا رابيا و مما يوقدون عليه فی النار ابتغاء حليه او متاع زبد مثله كذلك يضرب الله الحق و الباطل فاما الزبد فيذهب جفاء و اما ما ينفع

الناس فيمكث فی الارض كذلك يضرب الله الامثال

God sends down water from the sky, and the rivers flow each according to its" vastness; and the flood causes foam on the surface of the rivers; it is like the foam of ore when it melts in the furnace to make ornaments or utensils therewith. Thus God compares truth with falsehood; then as for the foam it passes away as scum upon the banks of the river but as for that which is of use to mankind (like water or ore) it remains on the earth. Thus does God set forth parables to explain the divine words of (revelation." (۱۳:۱۷

Man always seeks what is to his benefit, some of which is for him to continue living – his self-love. Man's ambition for his own benefit must be controlled enough not to .deviate from the right direction

The factors suggested by scholars as being motivating in history have sometimes been so, albeit not absolutely. For instance, sedimentary social trends, like fears and hopes, speculations and tendencies and stagnant cultural elements are, although not totally ineffective, not considered as absolute factors motivating history. Cleopatra's beauty did affect the position Anthony, the Roman general had, and Auguste Comte's .love for Clotilde did mellow his thoughts and make him support positivism

?Does History Advance on an Evolutionary Path

Man's advance on an evolutionary path in history is a quite unclear and improvable issue. What is observable in history is the expansion of human thoughts and influences throughout nature. The last two centuries, in which man's

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domination on history has increased extremely, has made some think that history is advancing on an evolutionary path. But can we insist on evolution when human ?virtues and values are diminishing

The fact that man still does not grieve over others' sorrow, that he attempts to destroy other human beings, that he still cannot control his own desires and moderate his selfishness, conveys the demise of history, not evolution. These factors cause :history to suffer from retardation rather than evolve

Lack of human awareness and consciousness -۱

The lack of constructive love -۲

Dignified, noble emotions fading away -۳

The conflict between power and righteousness -۴

Lack of self-recognition -۵

Lack of psychological balance -۶

Lack of self-control -۷

Neglecting outstanding figures -۸

Inability to live without weapons -۹

Infatuated passion for scientific issues instead of realistically studying them -۱۰

Human relations being dominated by greed -۱۱

Greed and profiteering becoming the factor of survival -۱۲

Hedonism -۱۳

Sacrificing human values -۱۴

Seeing oneself as the end and others as the means -۱۵

Avoiding a great loss by means of a smaller loss -۱۶

Disorders in the functions of living organisms -۱۷

Ruining one's environment -۱۸

Genocide -۱۹

Issues about men and women remain unsolved -۲۰

Man in conflict and opposition with himself -۲۱

.The disappearance of emotion and unity in life and personality -۲۲

The gradual transformation of independent characters into unoriginal ones -۲۳

The extinction of tender human emotions -۲۴

The waning of motherly emotions -۲۵

Lack of appreciation towards beauties -۲۶

Genetic deterioration -۲۷

The popularity of nihilism -۲۸

Fear and worry about the future of mankind -۲۹

Unawareness toward the reason for creation -۳۰

Inadvertent emphasis -۳۱

"on "tomorrow

Man's alienation from himself -۳۲

People's alienation toward each other -۳۳

Bargaining and haggling rules almost everything -۳۴

Incapability of social leaders in fulfilling their vows -۳۵

The place of arts is unknown -۳۶

The problem of relative and absolute, and also constant and variable remain - ۳۷ unsolved

۳۸- Imitation in issues concerning life

۳۹- The problem of children's education

۴۰- Neglect toward man's will and free will

۴۱- Suicide increases

۴۲- Ignorance towards the blessings God has lent us

۴۳- Lack of a logical relationship between the self and other than the self

۴۴- The problem of the relationship between the individual and the society remains unsolved

۴۵- The human brain is incomplete

۴۶- Ignorance toward the value of human lives

۴۷- War and crime

۴۸- Neglect toward seeking perfection and emancipation

۴۹- Ignorance toward God and the supernatural

۵۰- People disturbing and hurting each other

۵۱- Neglecting lying and other sins

۵۲- Deceit and hoodwinking.

Civilizations: The Principles and the Presumptions

point

The rise and development of civilizations does not follow a continuous pattern – changing from simple to complex. In other words, we cannot find any definite reason for why a civilization arises, and analyze it from scientific, philosophical, artistic or sociological points of view. If civilizations were phenomena identifiable in

specifications, identity, or reasons, there would never be so much debate among .scientists now

Furthermore, it is never possible to foresee the rise of a civilization. Some scholars believe civilizations to be a result of human need, but this is not always the case, and many civilizations have come into being due to man’s mental genius. Feeling the necessity to catch up

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with other rival communities can also lead to the birth of new cultures and .civilizations. The two factors we have mentioned are significant, but not sufficient

Man studies civilizations not to get to know their people and their life, but because civilizations and cultures are created by human endeavor, so studying them can reveal man’s primary and secondary needs, and the quality, quantity and strength of his physical and spiritual ideals. Thus, the more we know about man and the various .aspects of his existence, the deeper our knowledge of civilizations will be

The Difference between Civilization and Culture

Culture is the necessary or proper quality in man's physical or mental activities, based .on sound logic and emotions arising from sensible evolutionary lifestyles

Civilization is the establishment of order and harmony in social relationships, eliminating all interfering conflicts, and setting a competition towards development .and perfection, where the people’s social life makes their potentials begin to flourish

:Therefore, the differences between civilization and culture can be summarized as

۱- Culture points out the knowledge, goals, and ideals of a society, whereas civilization represents “the activities of the original factors of individual and social life.” This is why civilizations naturally find their way into other societies, but not cultures; there .should always be a dominant culture and a weaker one

۲- If the factors creating a culture are destroyed, it will no longer be dynamic, and only

traces of it may remain; civilizations, on the other hand, never become obsolete, for they are quite dependent upon the original factors of life. In other

.words, its stagnancy does not cause it to fade away

Various cultures have risen throughout history; we have as many cultures as there -۳ are nations and peoples, some of which have disappeared. There have been, .however, only ۲۱ civilizations

:Some points civilizations have in common are

a) Rights based on justice, which provide man's social life with order and harmony. .These rights are among the true ideals of life, and can be generalized for all societies

b) Discovering the best way to fight factors harmful to nature and mutinous men is .one of the ideal elements of civilization in all human societies

c) Another ideal element in every civilization is logical political management which can bring order and discipline among the members of the society, and help them develop .in all aspects

d) Discovering and using the technology necessary for fulfilling man's needs in life, and making use of the human mind and natural resources in order to provide people .with comfort is also among the highest of civilizational principles

e) Intelligible interpretation and justification of human mental and physical deeds is the outcome of man's vital energy. This element should not be considered solely from .a “purely natural efficiency” aspect

On the other hand, culture has activities and effects exclusive to a certain society and its people only. If the culture of a society originates from the true factors of human life and provides them with a dynamically flourishing life, it can be called a “civilization-.making” culture

:Civilization can be studied from two different points of view

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The man-oriented point of view, in which civilization is an organization ofhuman beings, in which all individuals and social groups have fine relationships and participate in advancing the physical and mental goals in order to achieve an intelligible life, where all human potentials and capabilities are activated.

This definition both includes the goals and ideals of societies, and shows the relationships between them.

۲ - The power-oriented point of view, which believes civilization to activate every potential and employing all forms of power, in order to advance the goals of ordinary, natural life.

This point of view ignores human development and the unity of mankind, and is totally focused on gaining power and the desire for it. In such a civilization, there is no interest in man or his values and virtues. Man's goal is believed to be reaching advanced science and technology which can provide man with luxury and the ability to do as he pleases.

What Elevates a Civilization

۱- Deep commitment to good values,

۲- Commitment to good deeds,

۳- People's tendency to great ideals,

۴- Great efforts in times of great danger, and attempting to overcome problems,

۵- People's commitment to keeping their promises,

۶- Practicing charity,

۷- Avoiding haughtiness,

۸- People's good intentions,

۹- Spiritual well-being of the members of the society,

۱۰- Righteousness being the basis of everyday life affairs,

۱۱- Being influenced by elevated motivations,

۱۲- Resistance against cruelty,

۱۳- Justice for all,

۱۴- Patience and control of one's temper,

۱۵- Avoiding corruption in the world,

۱۶- Commitment to affection and kindness,

۱۷- Making use of one's power to eliminate physical or spiritual disturbances,

۱۸- Great effort in times

of tests of faith or difficulties,

۱۹- Agreement on ideals and tendencies,

۲۰- Balance in desires,

۲۱- Penetrating visions.

The Basic Reasons Why Civilizations Fall

The basic reason for the demise of civilizations lies in this principle: "I exist, so you do not," or "Your existence depends on whether I want it or not." This is truly the essence of atrocity. As the Holy Qur'an says:

فکاین من قریه اهلکناها فهی ظالمه

(How many a city we have destroyed in its evildoing.”(۲۲:۴۵“

Cruelty can be regarded as “violating the true laws of intelligible life.” Thus, the :meaning of cruelty is unlimited and can include the following

.Even the slightest ignorance of one's conscience is cruelty to oneself -۱

.Allowing the smallest violation of one's rights by others is cruelty to oneself -۲

.Decreasing the value of human effort and its products is cruelty -۳

Creating circumstances in which man has to give up his work or occupation – - ۴ .whether willingly or otherwise – is cruelty

.Creating a dictatorship in which minds deteriorate is cruelty -۵

Disturbing the freedom of others is cruelty, even if the satisfaction of the violated -۶ .one is provided by deviating from the meaning of freedom

Creating artificial demand among people to sell imposed, worthless goods or ideas -۷ .is cruelty

Manipulating people's thoughts and emotions in order to impose one's ideas is - ۸ .cruelty

Making the minds of the people a showcase for one's righteousness is a violation of -۹ .their character, and cruelty

Volunteering for the position of political leadership when one cannot control one's -۱۰ own desires or greed for pleasure and selfishness

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.is cruelty to the society

Destroying an advantage or benefit that can solve people's problems or sooth - ۱۱

their pains is itself the worst kind of cruelty to mankind, let alone using the benefit as a .weapon against man

The Unconditional Philosophical Principles of Civilizations

point

In identifying civilizations, we must keep in mind the principles all of them have in :common. The five principles all civilizations have in common are

Principle One: The Self-love of Life

Self-love (egotism) is an undeniable principle of life. Self-protection, love for one's ego, natural selfishness, and attempts toward safeguarding life are some of its :manifestations. There are two kinds of self-loves

,a) Positive, or intelligible, self-love

.b) Negative self-love

Self-love is seen in animals too, but in human beings its range of activity is unlimited. Animals have no culture or civilization. Man, on the other hand, has the intelligence .and various talents to develop himself and create different cultures and civilizations

Human self-love is influenced by social factors, established ideals of the society and man's own physical and mental products. Developing man's awareness and selecting higher aims for life can control human self-love and guide it to the right path. This is what we may call intelligible self-love, which makes man consider the life of other .people valuable and try to help them develop themselves

Those who do not possess intelligible self-love are lured by their natural selfishness, and use all of their potentials to reinforce it. If natural selfishness is transformed into intelligible self-love, however, a civilization will be created that would never deviate from the path of evolution and perfection, and

.would be infallible

Skyscrapers and advanced technology do not make an ideal civilization. Neither does high-speed transportation, sophisticated inventions or saturating selfish desires, which make us forget all about the philosophy of life. Such advances are valuable .when they serve to activate man's talents and great human virtues

In brief, it is the moderation of self-love that makes an ideal civilization, which moves .on the road of intelligible life

Principle Two: The Economy

It is impossible to ignore the role of economy in developing or destroying a nation. The economy is not merely a component of a civilization; it ensures the survival of human life. Economic well-being and comfort is, however, not the main cause of a civilization. Although no civilization can arise without economic order and comfort, achieving it .does not necessarily imply a perfect civilization

There are civilizations enjoying economic luxury but devoid of great human virtues, like justice, moderation, love and many others. Economic progress provides the best grounds for the mental and psychological development – in many different aspects – of the members of the society. In other words, when the economic aspect of human life is fulfilled through logical economic principles, the best and even most essential .background for human development in all aspects is provided

Principle Three: Free Will and Freedom

Freedom and free will are both necessary for a civilization to arise, and for it to survive, for if human beings cannot feel themselves autonomous in their activities, they will begin to feel like machines guided under no freedom at all. In such a case, man

will not only be deprived of freedom, but also fall into self-bestrangedness. If social

and individual activities do not originate from one's own conscience and freedom, it .will be impossible to achieve a civilization truly human-oriented

We must keep in mind that the significant factor in recognizing the value of a civilization is "the developed freedom called free will" rather than pure freedom itself. Many sociologists take account of freedom in their evaluations of civilizations, but consider freedom as allowing man to do as he wishes. Such a freedom would conflict with conscience and common sense, and make man ignore all of the existing internal .and external principles

Freedom is in fact a path to achieve perfection. Freedom must turn into free will if an ideal civilization is desired, for free will means, using freedom with the purpose of .gaining what is good and elevating

When the human character reaches the level of free will, it always heads for goodness and perfection. Inside such a human being there is constant effort to do good, or act on good intentions. This is the free will founders of a real civilization need .in order to achieve a human-oriented civilization

Principle Four: Stagnant Civilizations Gradually Deteriorate

The activity of a civilization depends on its main resources. If the primary resources of a civilization stop advancing and developing, the civilization will become stagnant. For .instance, if its true geniuses and leaders are dead or forgotten, stagnancy will occur

Every civilization requires its own preservatives, without which it will fade away. Hence, only these civilizations can

.survive throughout history that rely on dynamic, self-sustained factors

Principle Five: The Law of Causality

۱ - Throughout history, there have been men who have claimed to aim for making justice a reality, but once they gained power, justice was downtrodden. Many a leader

has boasted that he would provide his people with prosperity and greatness, but has forgotten all about it when he took charge, and treated people as mere means for his .own goals

Mental and physical endeavor, sacrifice, putting aside one's personal desires and - ۲ tolerating hardships is necessary for any society to develop. Unfortunately, however, some societies forget about the role of people after they achieve victory, and .consider their triumph solely as their own

These points have led some to imagine that humans are not the main factor in :achieving social accomplishments. Their reasons for this are

If a society gains power, will its people have a prosperous life? Science does bring about the knowledge of reality, but has man always acted according to what he knows? Man sets laws to prevent injustice and atrocity, but does he obey them at all .times? The answer to all of these questions is negative

There are a few points we should keep in mind when discussing the domination of the :law of causality on human behavior

The law of causality is a general law and applies to all phenomena in the universe. - ۱ .No phenomenon in nature, history, the society or humanity occurs without a cause

Man's will, which has played the main role in many human achievements, defies - ۲ coincidence

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and the fact that an effect can occur with no cause. Since human activities are influenced by both internal and external factors, discussing the law of causality in .human activities also should be done through considering these factors

:There are two ways to lead, justify and account for human will -۳

a) A fatalistic approach to the human will in an attempt to reach what the leaders of the society want, like moderating will powers to achieve a predetermined, outlined

.life

b) Free will power heading for greatness and perfection. The grounds are readied for .people to both moderate their desires and to develop themselves

There are many forms of human activities, and sometimes several of them - ۴ influence an effect. Consider observing many just behaviors from the people when studying a civilization. Does such behavior imply satisfactory law enforcement, or vice versa? Or maybe none, and external forces may have caused the moderations? Or perhaps an extremely elevated set of beliefs? Has fear also been influential, or the love for justice? All the above factors are possible and determining which requires in-.depth investigation

When studying human societies and civilizations, it is important to distinguish two - ۵ :kinds of reasons

The reason that creates the effect, and -

.The reason that allows the effect to continue its existence -

If we are to study civilizations, we should keep in mind that sometimes a factor makes .a civilization arise, but for the survival of the civilization other factors are needed

Now we can resolve one of the most complicated criticisms

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on the law of causality in civilizations and societies. For example, when looking for the existence of a set of intelligible beliefs and proper rights in a civilized society, we should not jump to the conclusion that since the cause for the arising of these beliefs and rights is present, they can exist forever. When we realize that they have not, we !should not conclude that causality has no influence on societies and civilizations

Now that we have categorized causes into two groups – those that create and those that make existence continue – such a misunderstanding should be eliminated. In order for intelligible beliefs and proper rights to survive, the willingness of the people

and other social and geographical factors are important, not the causes that created .them

Conditional Philosophical Principles in Civilizations

When discussing the philosophical principles concerning civilizations, we must keep in mind the fact that the five above-mentioned unconditional principles cannot influence a civilization without limitations from both internal and external factors. Let us take a deeper look at this issue by studying the principles above by relating them to the .conditional principles

The unconditional principle of self-love cannot exist without any limitations in any -١ society or civilization. Internal and external factors on one hand and other people's .selfishness on the other can make any individual in the society selfish

In a man-oriented civilization, efforts must be made in order to limit unconditional, general principles like selfishness inside logical limits, in favor of man. For example, education and management in the society

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should be in a way that people's selfishness can be moderated without the fatalistic .influence of punishment or trapping people in the chains of a mechanically rigid life

The unconditional principle of economy also should be accompanied by principles -٢ that uproot poverty in the society. In fact the absolute dominance of the economy – a general, unconditional principle – must be moderated in order to fulfill the financial needs of all members of the society; as a conditional principle that can guarantee the .survival of a civilization

Freedom is an extremely important phenomenon without which no man-oriented -٣ civilization can become true. Unlimited, un-moderated freedom will lead to the end of mankind, so freedom should turn into free will to supervise man's deeds. Freedom-seeking, therefore, is a general, unconditional principle that should be conditioned by .righteousness and perfectionism

۴- The principle that claims stagnancy can bring about the fall of a civilization becomes true when its people and also social leaders lose their sense of perfectionism; despite internal and external pressures, civilizations do not fall unless their fundamentals fade away. If a civilization enjoys doubtless, internally dynamic bases – in other words, if it is man-oriented and its people actively preserve it – the civilization would never disappear. External factors cannot cause anything further than temporary stagnancy.

۵- The fifth unconditional principle, the law of causality, can become unconditional by means of the knowledge and needs of the people making the civilization. Man's awareness, power and wishes concerning the problems of a civilization

greatly influence its survival or fall.

The Relationships between Civilizations

The question whether civilizations are related has always been a part of discussions about them. Do civilizations influence each other? There are three theories about it:

a) All civilizations are related and mutually influence each other.

b) No civilization can influence another, for civilizations are too far apart both in time and distance.

c) The relationships among civilizations can be neither totally defied nor proved. Studies on civilizations reveal some points in common between them, but none of them mean that one of them can be the origin of another. We must keep in mind that:

۱- Commonalities observed among people in senses, thoughts, imagination and original wishes concerning life and its ideal quality can lead to commonalities between civilizations.

Apart from environmental conditions that can prepare the grounds for a civilization to come into being, the other important factors that can bring about the rise of a civilization are geniuses who possess positive thoughts and efforts and also the issue

of vital needs that lead to increases in man's knowledge and his relationship with .nature

There should be a distinction between original civilizations and those that are - ۲ imitational; such a distinction exists for cultures. Civilizations like Islam and the Byzantine are original, and have not been influenced by any other civilization. They .arose from inside their societies themselves

The physical effects of civilizations, like economic luxury and legal security, should - ۳ be distinguished from man's spiritual development and glory, for if the latter is not regarded as the path to

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achieve an intelligible life – the main goal of a civilization – it would never be an .original civilization, no matter how luxurious its people may be

In a man-oriented civilization, man is sacrificed to the benefit of the tools and devices he himself has built. An obvious example is the Western civilization, made by man but alas heading for the destruction of mankind. The West has presented thirty Articles on the Human Rights, but it has presented nothing on how to be human and what an .intelligible life includes

Now that we have proved that physical effects of progress in human relationship with nature and the unfolding of various human aspects in a purely natural environment are different from man-oriented civilizations, we can conclude that even if human civilizations influence each other, this cannot be true in the case of man-oriented .civilizations, for no civilization can command another to be man-oriented

Without thought, freedom and determination to achieve intelligible life, becoming man-oriented is impossible. Relationships among civilizations are similar to the relationship between two people – one at the peak of human development and perfection, the other the contrary. If the person spiritually developed intends to have a positive influence on the other one, mere relationship would not be enough; the

.deprived person should intelligently and freely determine to make progress

:The Holy Qur’an has also pointed this out in various ways, for example

تلک امه قد خلت لها ما کسبت و لکم ما کسبتم

That is a nation that has passed away; there“

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awaits them what they have earned, and there awaits you what you have earned.” ((۲:۱۳۴

In brief, civilizations can have mutual influence to physical extent, but cannot imitate each other from a man-oriented point of view. A man-oriented civilization can present its positive experiences, principles and laws, such as fair behavior toward each other, .intelligible freedom, sound economy, dominant human virtues and morals, etc

Men and Women: A Serious Study

point

Despite all the pain and oppression women have undergone throughout history, no mentally sound woman feels sorry about her gender. Women have not begged nature to change their creation, no matter how painful their social pressures have been; there is greatness hidden in women that no man can ever par. Women devote their whole life and soul to men in order to obey the rules of creation and play their part in .the rhythm of the universe

Women should have faith in what they are; they ought to never ignore their distinctive aspects or waste time comparing themselves with men. Men and women should take into consideration the significance of the family, for that is what .determines the fate of a society

Men and women depend upon each other. Men rely on women, and vice versa. They do not differ in humanity. Men are as human as women are. If men do not recognize

women, they do not deserve to be called humans; likewise, we cannot regard women .human unless they recognize men

Despite all that men and women have in common, they also differ in certain characteristics. This

:is when questions like these are posed

- ?Can women bear dire straits as well as men can
- ?Do women have genius, the power to discover or invent
- ?Are women equal to men in pure intellect
- ?Aren't men stronger than women when life comes to a dead-end
- ?Don't men have more baseless pride than women

Before we can respond to such questions – which are posed by those influenced by specific character and immature emotions and the answers too are affected by social factors – we must realize the fact that both sexes are subject to a great deal of diversity in mental activity. Not all men are equal. Can Imam Ali's humanitarian feelings and Hajaj ibn Yousef's hideous atrocities be compared? Are all men as intelligent as Avicenna was? Can we consider a woman who regards herself as part of her man's personality as equal to a woman who spends a life of hatred and disgust toward her husband? Therefore, we can point out two forms of differences between .men and women

١- Differences that are not related to men or women's specific identity, but rather the differences existing among men as a whole, and among women as a whole. Such differences should not be regarded as differences between men and women.If nature granted some men and women's wish to be absolutely equal, or allowed women to drown in the games the purely theoretical intelligence plays, indulging in the momentary pleasures of life, like reproduction, or if

nature granted men with the deep emotions women have, and a taste of real life and submitting one's body and soul to the highest call of nature instead of a real knowledge of the flow of life, would such equality not degrade man down to the level ?of extinct animals

Differences due to the diversities of identities among men and women. As Islam - ۲ asserts, these differences are doubtlessly not related to the human nature or .disposition

The Identity of Men and Women

Men and women are exactly alike in human identity and character. Their human :identity can be discussed from two different points of view

a) Independently and separately

b) In regard to each other

If men and women were to be separate, none of the hundreds of consequences they create in each other would be possible, and only their independent characteristics would flourish. Through physical and spiritual interaction, they create qualities in one .another that is impossible to achieve individually

Thus, a woman attracted by a man is different from the same woman living .separately. Men also undergo change when they are attracted by a woman

If we are to completely discover a married man's character, we should study his wife's character, too, for she affects her man's life, and vice versa for a married woman's case. If marriage occurs based upon the man and woman's natural, God-given identity and awareness of the human character on behalf of both the man and .the woman, they can activate the highest of human virtues in themselves

Some of the characteristics cited for

men and women arise not from their character, but from secondary reasons. Some people believe, for instance, that women, unlike men, are incapable of changing their character. Men are believed to have the ability to gain the elements needed to change their character due to their frequent contact with various people and high awareness. However, there have been great women like Rabe'a Aduya Basri who had a clear picture of themselves, and reached the highest of mystical levels.

Some others believe that "women are not tolerant to loneliness. They cannot be alone or keep to themselves. A woman with no man feels more imperfect than a man with no woman." This also seems inaccurate, for we must first see what we mean by loneliness. If it means ignorance and isolation due to failure, that is neither imperfection nor an advantage for a man, and if one isolates oneself to study one's own character, that is true perfection – few men indeed have been able to do that.

Some people believe that women like their men to be muscular, and prefer men of physical strength to the average men.

That is not correct, for women actually prefer their men to be strong and firm in response to the problems and events of life. They like their husbands to be able to battle the ups and downs of life. It is also said that men pay more attention to women's beauty. Men do not have such an identity. men like their wives to be able

to manage the family.

Theoretical Wisdom in Men and Women

Men's theoretical wisdom is stronger than women. Men can understand a series of facts by means of acquired knowledge, whereas women intuitively get a picture of some facts. Women seem to have intuitive knowledge about others' life, whereas men's knowledge should be gained. In other words, women see the truth of life in their own nature, but men have to use their senses and purely theoretical wisdom to

do so. Such photography is not limited to life. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi :(Rumi) says

تا بدانی کآسمانهای سمی هست عکس مدرکات آدمی

گر نبودی عکس آن سرّ و سُرور پس نخواندی ایزدش دارالغرور

So that you may realize that the high skies are reflections of man's internal cognitions) and perceptions. Don't you know that God has called this world the House of Deceit? The reason is that everything seen in the outside world is a picture, a reflection, of (.what goes on inside man

Men may have oceans on knowledge about the phenomenon called life and all of its characteristics and developments, but as we all know, that is quite different from .getting a taste of life itself

Women can intuitively understand other people's lives like their own. That is why history has been full of bloodthirsty tyrants like Genghis Khan, Nero and Attila, but very few of them were women. One exception was Cleopatra, who took pleasure in .putting needles into her maidservants

When a woman

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loves a man, she is ready to sacrifice her life for him, but when a man loves a woman, he will not do such a sacrifice, no matter how great his love for her may be. That is where women are greater than men. Women are deeper in the context of life; on the other hand, men have stronger purely theoretical wisdom. That is not a human value. .Abstract activities do not convey a value

Men and Women in the Family

:There are several possibilities about the role of men and women in the family

۱- Both man and woman manage the family. Each of them can have full authority and

responsibility. This, however, is not acceptable, for it will cause disturbances and .disorders in family life

The woman can manage the family. This is also unacceptable, for the family has a -۲ lot of contact with the society, the adjusting of which is not possible considering the .incapability woman have in dealing with some problems

Menstruation, pregnancy, nursing children and the necessity of making them familiar with the real taste of life – which women are extremely better at than men – are issues of crucial importance. These engagements cause serious problems if women .are to be the sole leader of the family and deal with the problems outside the family

The man can rule a patriarchy, a total dictatorship. This is wrong too, for it will ruin -۳ the woman's values, and the children raised in such a family will never get a taste of .real life

The -۴

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family can be managed through group brainstorming and consultation accompanied by the supervision and management of the man. This seems to be the most logical form. This is possible, however, provided that all family members act on piety and justice. The decisions made through consultation are undertaken by the man to carry .out

In the following verse of the Qur’an, the word “qavvam” refers to the fourth possibility :mentioned above

الرجـال قوامون على النساء بما فضل الله بعضـهم على بعض و بما انفقوا من اموالهم فالصالحات قانتات حافظات للغيب بما حفظ الله

Men are overseers and maintainers of women because God has made one of them“ excel to the other, and because the husbands provide the living. Therefore, righteous women are obedient and guard in their husband's absence what God orders them to

(guard." (۴:۳۴

:Let us consider several points in order to interpret of this verse

a) Here, "qavvam" does not mean "having custody and responsibility" in its legal or jurisprudential concept, which refers to someone who is liable for another person's life and belongings, like having custody of a child, or an insane person. Thus, men do not have custody of women, for women are free from all economic, moral and religious aspects of their lives, and even socially, provided that they do not violate men's rights. Women must be responsible and accountable about the duties they have toward men. Likewise, men must also observe and fulfill the duties he has in .regard to women

b) "Qavvam," considering the great deal of verses conveying

the equality of men and women, means management and carrying out what is to the benefit of the family. The fact that the man must manage the family is due to man's resistance against the ups and downs of life and disturbing factors. If a woman rules a family and the man is completely marginalized, the man's potentials are downtrodden; this leads to serious disorders that will cause profound mental .problems in the children

Absolute dictatorship on the man's behalf also disables the potentials the woman and the other family members have. If the family is managed through consultation and group thinking, however, in which man has the executive responsibility, no rights will .be violated; the man will see himself as part of the woman's character, and vice versa

c) The word "fazl" in this verse does not convey that men are superior to women; it .means that men are stronger built, and are more resistant against problems

d) The verse points out women's human values. It points out that proper women are in constant contact with God, and safeguard God's commands in the absence of the man. They do not tarnish the man's character. Such women are guardians of the

institution of the family. It is an experienced principle that if the woman in a family is a complete human being of reason and piety, all family members will almost definitely be happy, prosperous people, from the adult to the child. If the woman ignores human ,values, piety and good decision-making

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however, the man will have little effect on the family, no matter how great a human .being he may be

The verse then discusses cases in which women show disobedience and what should :be done about it

و اللاتی تخافون نشوزهن فغظوهن و اهجروهن فی المضاجع و اضربوهن فان اطعنکم فلا تبغوا علیهن سبیلا

And of those women you fear may be rebellious admonish; [if that does not work]" banish them to their couches, [and if that proves also ineffective] warn them [and beat them very lightly]. And when they obey you, look not for any other way against them."((۴:٣۴

:There are several kinds of actions to be taken when women commit disobedience

Disobedience in sexual relationships due to the woman's physical problems. In this -١ .case, the only solution is seeking medical help

Seeking revenge and crushing the man's character during sexual relationship. Such -٢ :disobedience can be divided into two types

a) Those that can be solved and moderated personally: here, the man can use logical and affectionate understanding, conscientious advice in bed and maybe even a very slight beating – that would lead to the least physical trouble for the woman – to eliminate the woman's obedience and bring peace and happiness back to their .relationship

How do we interpret by "beating" in the above verse? It refers to a very slight beating, like with a toothbrush. Imam Baqer also has a hadith on this, and no jurisprudential

scholar has advised beyond that. In fact, it is not a beating at all; it is

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.merely a warning reminding the woman to fulfill her duty

What is the beating for? It serves the benefits of the man and the woman both, rather than providing revenge or quenching grudges. As Shahid-e-thani, the great jurisprudential scholar has said, “Beating a woman is religiously forbidden if it only serves to avenge grudges or satiate selfishness, and has no benefit for the couple's ”.relationship

If the man's beating harms or injures the woman physically or mentally, the man has committed a crime. As all Islamic jurisprudential scholars have emphasized, “the ”.beating should lead to absolutely no bleeding or suffering for the woman

b) Those unable to be solved and moderated personally: in such cases, the man must not use force; instead, he is to seek legal help from a judge, who will decide based upon the couple's mental situation and what is best for their relationship. Sometimes the judge may advise proper, logical solutions to which both the man and the woman should adhere, for the three different ways the above verse provides to solve problems are only to be used when it really helps the couple; they should not rush to a judge as soon as a small, personal problem arises – instead, they should try to solve it through intriguing affections, providing the possible guidance and slight warnings, ,which as the above verse and jurisprudential interpretations depict

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.refers to very light beating

The woman's disobedience from her legal responsibilities: Again, maybe the couple can solve the problem here by means of mutual understanding, affection and logic; this is where the guidance, warning against wrongdoing and advising to do good, a .must in Islamic rules, comes in

Three Issues Concerning the Differences between Men and Women

In the Nahj-ul-balaghah, three points of difference has pointed out between men and .women: imperfect faith, imperfect intelligence and different inheritance

معاشر الناس ان النساء نواقص الایمان نواقص الحظوظ نواقص العقول. فاما نقصان ایمانهن فقعودهن عن الصلوه والصیام فی ایام حیضهن و اما نقصان عقولهن فشهاده امر اتین کشهاده الرجل الواحد و اما نقصان حظوظهن فمواریثهن علی الانصاف من مواریث الرجال

O people, women have imperfect faith, imperfect inheritance and imperfect" intelligence. The reason for their imperfect faith is that they miss a great deal of prayers and fasting when they menstruate. Their intelligence is imperfect because the testimonies given by two women is equal to one man's testimony. The third ".imperfection is because women inherit half of what men do

:Let us discuss these points

۱ - Imperfect faith: Women's faith is incomplete, for they cannot fast or say their prayers during their menstruation periods. This does not mean that their contact with God is imperfect; the point is merely their deprivation of their mandatory fasting and praying. Women can call God's name during these periods, and keep their contact .with God. Their inability to pray or fast is just a passing, exceptional physical inhibition

۲- Imperfect intelligence: Here, again we are not

implying imperfection in values. As we know, intellectual activity consists of correctly thinking about choosing the means for reaching the desired goals. Thus, all human beings have intellect and reason in common. They differ in how familiar they are with the units and theorems used for reaching their goals. Mental and intellectual activities are highly diverse. They include abstraction, generalization, and combining issues. Theoretical wisdom functions with logic. It has nothing to do with values; it only .adjusts the preliminaries and arrangement of the means

Purely theoretical wisdom is a tool for arranging and adjusting units regarded as correct in order to reach desired goals. It is not the absolute ruler of the facts and .values of human knowledge of nature and what is proper for man

Men and women differ in theoretical wisdom, though this difference does not mean that one sex has more value than the other, either. In practical wisdom, however, men and women are the same. Practical wisdom conveys what is proper, and how to achieve it. Some thinkers, like Kant, have considered practical wisdom as higher and more elegant than theoretical wisdom. What men are stronger in – theoretical wisdom – has no value alone; it can go no further than forming and arranging units and theorems. What really causes superiority is practical wisdom, which is equal in .both sexes

If women gain complete educational and developmental factors, we can claim that ,the development of the human character is as feasible in women as it is in men

for women have a crucial role in creation, they get a taste of real life and have the supreme emotions and the possibility to elevate their raw emotions to supreme ones; .women are better at that than men

Inequality of Men and Woman Testifying

This again lies in women's natural limitation and their lack of resistance against various events. Men are curious enough to mentally dig inside the roots of events, and are more capable and theoretically more accurate than women, so if a man is left far away from the ups and downs of life, his judgment will find fault, and his testimonies will also lose value. In affairs which only women can comment on, their testimonies .are as valuable as men's

:Imperfect inheritance: Men and women inherit differently. As the Holy Qur'an says -۳

لوصیکم الله فی اولادکم للذکر مثل حظ الانثیین

(About your offspring, God advises you to give men twice as much as women.”(۴:۱۱“

This law, however, does not apply to all issues of patrimony. If someone dies and has a mother, and a few brothers or sisters, for instance, his mother inherits as much as .his brothers and sisters

The reason why men inherit twice as much as women is that men are responsible for providing the family's living, but women do not have such a responsibility. Furthermore, women are entitled to a marriage settlement that makes up for the .difference in what they benefit after their parents' death

As a general conclusion, we can say that all three imperfections mentioned about women are accountable and

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justifiable. Imam Ali has referred to superficial differences between men and women; .he does not consider them to be truly different in character

God: From Seeking God to Faith in God

The History of Belief in God

The history of theism is probably equal to the history of mankind itself. Since man's mental structure, capabilities and forces have not undergone dramatic change throughout at least the last ۴۰۰۰۰ years, we must say that belief in God has at all times existed. The supernatural tendencies and prayers that have accompanied man's life ever since he came into being, prove that man has never been without believing in .God

Of course, man has at times erred in his supernatural tendencies and worshiped other beings rather than God. Some sociologists studying religions have attempted to prove that in order to evolve from ignorance to knowledge, man had to begin with idolatry, and subsequently turn to monotheism. They present these two reasons in defying the :history of monotheism

Man's worshipping idols and statues instead of God shows that monotheism has -١ not existed since ancient times. In response, we must say that there are still a great many unsolved things about primitive men – such as the magic some say they did – that cannot be scientifically considered to be true and that man worshiped nothing but those; such findings should not be generalized as being the only things that really were. Even today, there are sacred places around the world in which people, although .believing in God, still have deep respect for

Throughout history, man -٢

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has always been attracted by "gods." Even after Abraham, "gods" were still very popular and were given specific duties. Some writers seem to have imagined that .these gods were really worshiped instead of the one God

There are several reasons proving that the word god has been used referring to .particularly sacred or respected things and people

a) As Abu -Reihan Biruni quotes from Galen, "Great men who have achieved extreme " '.mastery and skill in industries or medicine deserve to be included among 'gods

b) Abu -Reihan Biruni believes that the fact that the public are more interested in what they can sense rather than the rational is the reason why sculptures have been so .popular in nations all over the world

c) Plato, a monotheist philosopher, believed that human spirits were made by secondary gods. Plato used the term "gods" referring to abstract and adducent .objects

d) Some ignorant Arabs, although believing in God, called God at first and then their .idol while performing the Haj pilgrimage

e) The Holy Qur'an has also pointed out that Arabs thought idols would provide them :with intercession with God

و یقولون هولاء شفعانا عندالله

(They say´ These are our intercessors with God. " (۱۰:۱۸"

Void of Reasons for Defying God

None of those who defy God have ever been able to produce any reasons why God does not exist. Atheists and materialists have no reasons that show there is no origin to the universe; they have merely criticized the reasons theists have for the existence of God. Debating on the reasons why God

exists cannot logically prove that God does not exist. If one is to defy the existence of God, independent reasons that God does not exist are required.

Those who defy God mainly refer to the evil and discomfort in the world. If there really is a God, they say, why is there so much pain and suffering in the world?

Such criticism will obviously never lead to the defiance of God, for the most we are able to conclude from it is that the order and harmony in the universe is not what we might expect or imagine. In fact, those who refer to evil in the world are concerned with divine justice rather than the actual existence of God itself.

As Voltaire says, those who attempt to defy the existence of God by referring to the evil and suffering in the world are like someone who enters a highly sophisticated mansion full of exquisite architecture, paintings and woodwork. Although the extremely skillful works he sees can only lead to the fact that a master must have built them, he says that since he found drops of blood and broken arms and legs on the stairs or in the hall, such a mansion cannot have a maker! This is clearly a baseless argument, for asking about the maker of a mansion is quite irrelevant to violations in the laws and rules that govern it.

Classifying People based on Their Belief in God

According to their belief in God, humans can be divided into three groups:

Believers in God: This group is dominant -۱

both qualitatively and quantitatively, for most scientists and great thinkers .throughout history have believed in God

The Indifferent: These people do not seem to have any belief in God, nor do they -۲ .believe in the existence of any absolute being as God, either

This group includes anyone who has no inclination, tendency or actions based on belief – anyone who doubts the existence of God, those who defy God in imitation of others, and those who may realize deep inside that there must be some kind of .extreme origin or force, but fail to associate it with God

These people have not turned indifferent about God in spite of their research, awareness or knowledge, for if they are provided with suitable instructions and .guidance, they abandon their defiance and doubts

Those who have turned against God: Some people lose their belief in God, and -۳ claim that they scientifically or philosophically doubt that God exists. Based on why :they turn away from God, these people can be categorized as

a) Personal: These people turn away from God because they fail to achieve the goals or ideals they set for themselves. For example, those who attempt to gain wealth, fame, or power, sulkily abandon their faith when they are unable to get what they aim .for; in fact, they suffer from a multi-personality syndrome

b) Ideological: Some people claim that the reasons theists have for the existence of God are baseless, because we cannot see or feel

.God or evil and suffering has filled the world

Despite the philosophical and/or scientific justification these people have for their

criticism, an intellectual will never accept them as reasons that can prove that there is no God; even if the theists' reasoning is baseless or the world is full of evil and suffering, it cannot mean God does not exist. How can such people claim that they have studies the universe carefully and found no God? If their criterion is feeling that God exists, why do they not observe their own thoughts, which is the base of all their ?activities

Each human being knows that he/she has a "self," an ego. In spite of this, the human body becomes ill, and suffers a lot at times. Does that mean that man has no ego, no "self," for if he did, he would never suffer? Although man's ego adjusts his actions and behavior, it also warns him about things that might harm him physically or mentally. The ego's functions are not limited to man's physical, worldly life; yet, it is not comparable to God's role in the universe, for God influences everything about man infinitely, even things far beyond man's control. Thus, even the slightest attention to .the human "self" will never lead to defiance of the existence of God

Factors Inhibiting Obvious Recognition of God

Man can achieve faith and knowledge about the existence of God, for there are a great many logical reasons supporting it. There are, on the other hand, various veils that inhibit it. We can

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:categorize the inhibiting factors as

Those arising from practical deviations, like drowning in sins and lusts, which make -۱ man both fail to recognize God and communicate with Him, and darken the most obvious reasons supporting God's existence, changing them into a bunch of meaningless, ineffective words. There are many thinkers and intellectuals who are highly proficient in divine philosophy and have mastered the reasons that clearly prove that God exists, but still do not believe in God. Such people are empty of any supreme human-divine sense of responsibility. Their points of view have been blinded .by both scientific factors and practical deviations

Some scientific perceptions about the universe have also hindered true belief in – ٢ God. As we know, there are many aspects to the universe, and man has made contact with it with specific aims and viewpoints. Sometimes our discoveries make us associate one characteristic of one component of the universe with all its other components. For example, when we observe the dominance of quantity, we may .regard it as an absolute fact that dominates all aspects of the universe

The less man's mental development, the more natural occurrences and appearances .penetrate into his mind, which he uses to evaluate all facts about the universe

The inhibitions caused by incorrect scientific receptions are due to mental and spiritual weaknesses of individuals themselves, for they are incapable of freeing their intelligence of the superficial occurrences and issues of nature. The most significant ,of "scientific veils" is absolutist perceptions of the law of causality

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which the normal mind saturates with absolute concepts and destroys his sense of absolutism toward discovering the basic principles of the universe. Inaccurate .comprehension of the law of causality changes it into a thick barrier

As we know, there is some definite information at hand on the law of causality. Some :of these facts are

- .Every effect has a cause
- .A cause cannot transfer something it does not have to its effect
- .The principle of "same kinds" between the cause and its effect

The problem with causality in regard to God starts when we extract the causes of things from nature, and suppose there is no room left for God as the creator of the whole world of nature. Thus, we put God aside from nature, considering Him as the cause of all causes among the chain of nature's components. In other words, God is regarded as the creator of the first natural reason, the manager of the whole of

.nature, and nature is considered to be the one controlling itself directly

We see in the Holy Qur’an that every event and motion in the universe is directly :related to God. All of nature is an act of God

The big mistake is that we – consciously or unconsciously – derive the main operative cause out of material and superficial causes, concluding their independence of the direct creator, and putting God at the very beginning of the creation chain. Interestingly, we even call God the primary cause – the cause of

.all causes

That, indeed, is the real point. We must realize that God, though being the primary reason and the cause of all causes, is in fact the actual creator of the whole universe.”

Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) says that as long as we human beings are imprisoned in our natural senses and theoretical intelligence, all of our receptions will be confined to natural appearances; only if we can step far beyond these superficial :causes may we find God, the direct truth behind all events

بی سبب بیند چو دیده شد گذار تو که در حبسی، سبب را گوش دار

با سببها از مسبّب غافلی سوی این روپوشها زآن مایلی

هین ز سایه شخص را میکن طلب در مسبب رو گذر کن از سبب

Those who have made great effort in life and succeeded in ignoring the pleasures of) natural life, stepping beyond their natural self, achieve the level in which the causes and reasons of the world are revealed to them. Their penetrative eyes can now see the underlying foundation of the universe which is independent upon the cause-and-effect relationships. But you, drowning in your mortal lusts and animal-like desires! !You, who have sold the gem called 'your life' for meager selfishness

Now that you are indeed imprisoned in this ring of senses and superficialities, keep

struggling in the fatal whirlpool of causalities, and just go on desperately grabbing for something to cling to. You are so absorbed in

causes and effects that you are ignoring the creator of them all; all you see is superficial effects. From these shadows you see (in fact, man's existence), you can find the shadow-maker; indeed, these apparent causes can lead you to the Master of (.All Causes

Our theoretical intelligence sometimes pays attention only to superficial reasons, .failing to penetrate deep into the mysterious ways the universe works

این سبب را محرم آمد عقل ما و آن سببها راست محرم انبیا

وآن سببها کانبیا را رهبر است آن سببها زین سببها برتر است

It is indeed the very hidden causes that guide prophets on their mission. By contact) with these causes, they can perform miracles in this world. The hidden causes are much greater than their natural counterparts in this world. We can only realize these natural causes, whereas prophets of God can use those supreme causes and (.reasons

(Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi

Essentiality Reasoning

Saint Anslem, the Christian thinker, presented this form of reasoning, and later on philosophers like Descartes continued using it. It is based upon the image man makes of God in his mind. First, man defines God as the greatest being imaginable, and then as the most complete, perfect being imaginable. Anslem believes that if God is not considered as the most perfect, things more perfect than God can exist. If God is not a being, we cannot consider God as the most perfect thing of all, and

that is not what we believe. Here, we have proved that the opposite of what we want to prove is wrong; since God cannot be non-existent, He must exist. Thus, the basics :of this reasoning are

.We imagine God as the greatest or most perfect existence of all -١

What we imagine must exist, for if it does not, we have not imagined the most -٢ .perfect being

.Thus, God, as the most perfect, complete being, must exist -٣

The biggest problem with this reasoning is the mixing of the first, natural concept and the secondary, popular one. Anslem has mixed up primary, natural being with consequential creation. God being existent and perfect as the primary nature is fine, but the latter is inaccurate. Merely imagining the most perfect being does not lead to the external occurrence of the most perfect. We can, for instance, consider a partner for the primary nature that must exist – God – as the first, natural idea, but that will .not make such a partner for God exist externally, too

All in all, if a concept is in nature perfect, but when actually existent is not, this does .not create a contradiction for us to use this form of reasoning for

This reasoning is called the essentiality reasoning, also called the perfection reasoning. Here, existence arises from essentiality. This reasoning has roots in :Islamic prayers and hadith. As the Sabah prayer by Imam Ali reads

يا من دلّ على ذاته بذاته

O God, the God Whose nature is itself a reason for“

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”.the existence of His nature

:And let us quote from Imam Zain-ul-abedin in the Abu Hamzeh Thumali prayer

بک عرفتک و انت دللتنی علیک ... و لو لا انت ما ادر ما انت

I discovered You through You Yourself; You reasoned me toward Yourself. If not for “
”?You, how could I ever know You

:Now let us describe this reasoning

All human beings of sound mind and soul pay attention to the concept of God. Even -۱
those who defy God must pay attention to the concept of God's existence at first. If one says that God exists, he has undoubtedly understood that God is a concept that can exist. One who says that God doesn't exist also understands that God is a concept that cannot exist. In fact, the concept of God has been distinguished from the imagination of God, because the concept of God can be paid attention to, but it cannot
.be imagined. We realize that we are enjoying something, but we cannot imagine it

The concept of God in developed minds is, “the most perfect truth, the richest - ۲
existence and the most powerful,” for even the slightest imperfection would tarnish
.the concept of being God

The god some thinkers have cast doubt on has characteristics that are not compatible with the real God, so their doubt is not justifiable. Bertrand Russell, for instance, who is doubtful about God, has failed to understand God correctly; the god Russell has
.recognized does not exist at all

,Having recognized God as the most complete, perfect being

we must say that God needs no other being – even Himself – and if someone claims that he can understand the highest of beings in a way that it also needs something, he
.has not recognized the highest of beings at all

God, as the most perfect, complete being, exists. In other words, recognizing God -۳
as the greatest, most perfect, is a necessity for His reality, just like confirming the fact that a triangle has three sides when we see it. Merely recognizing God as the highest,

most complete being is a sign that God exists, and if one claims that such recognition cannot prove God's existence – as Anslem was criticized – we can consider his claim :as due to three factors

a) The impossibility of God's existence

b) The absence of reasons

c) Inhibiting barriers

Firstly, as we have said before, no reason can defy that God exists. Secondly, this concept needs no reason. Thirdly, even if it had inhibiting barriers, it would not be recognized as the most perfect being at all. In other words, being the absolutely perfect contradicts with having reasons (causes) and also with having barriers .inhibiting its existence

Actually, the difference between these statements and Anslem's reasoning is that Anslem insists on the image of God, whereas we emphasize recognizing and .understanding God. In other words, natural recognition is significant here

In brief, this deduction consists of making man understand his own disposition, rather than having a reality outside the human mind reflected upon it. Man can understand

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.and recognize what he has in himself my means of this deduction

As we said about Anslem's reasoning, merely imagining something is not a sign that it really exists externally; we can imagine many things without them having any .external existence

Considering normal knowledge, such an objection is correct and logical, but we should not forget the fact that no imagination leads to its subject actually existing in the real world; thus, the existence of a fact always needs a cause. Just imagining does not imply its existence. Concerning our topic, however, our supposition is that our mind .has been able to recognize a being that needs no cause

Of course, the mere imagining of a being that needs no cause does not make us accept its reality, unless we intuitively recognize it; gained imagination is not enough. .And intuitive recognition is nothing more than man's God-seeking disposition

Some may claim that imagining such a being is hallucination. In other words, the human mind can have a wrong image of God, a God that is scared and coward, just like other cases when the human mind can imagine an effect without imagining its .cause

In response, we must say that the issue of God cannot be imagination or hallucination, for if one believes in God, he either knows that his belief is a hallucination or he does not. If he knows that he has imagined something unreal and wrong, why has he made so much effort toward proving it or defying it? If the imagination

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were in fact unreal, man should never have worshipped God so much throughout .history. And if he does not know, there is no argument at all

When studying this reasoning, we should keep in mind whether deep inside us we can recognize the most complete being or not. This is why merely recognizing the most perfect being brings about belief that He exists, just as simply as one accepts that ۲×۲=۴. There is no need for a medium state here. In other words, the substance for its .reasoning is included in itself

Faith

point

The best way to define faith is: the confirmation of an active conscience. Some scholars have regarded faith as merely confirmation – so do some hadith – where it means expressing the distinct, understandable base of the public. Thus, we can conclude that the main idea here is the confirmation of an active conscience, for conformation alone cannot make any effect in the mind; there is great difference

between confirming something and making effect based upon it . Most conscious, aware people admit the necessity of justice for individual and social human life, but few men have actually executed justice. Man will definitely be just if he considers .justice as part of his own life

The Necessity of Faith

It is sometimes asked whether man can live without faith or not. In response, we must first see what life means here. If it means endeavor toward satisfying natural, animal-like desires, faith is not only unnecessary, rather even disturbing. Those who claim that man has no

.need for faith are in fact referring to animal life

But if life means paying attention to all human potentials and talents, man cannot .definitely do without faith

If man has faith, all his thoughts and deeds will be in accordance with the law. Such a man will do things out of eagerness and enthusiasm, not reluctance that will later .make him feel guilty

:There are three points of misunderstanding about faith nowadays

١ - Evil persons pretending to have faith. Machiavellians have no stronger tool for .misleading others than pretending to have faith

٢ - Mental errors concerning faith. Some people think that any kind of faith arises out of pure worship. In other words, the believer considers his every action or thought to .be based upon worship

٣ - Verbal manipulation. Instead of having faith in God and His prophets and considering the ultimate goal of the universe and obeying God's orders, some people .confine faith to a series of concepts

Nowadays, concepts like humanism or advocating science or freedom have become playthings in the hands of the selfish, who have deprived man of a series of realities, .because they themselves have no faith in these concepts at all

We must remember, however, that the three above-mentioned orientations cannot defy the necessity of faith for a human being who tends to live an interpretable life in .this world

:The consequences of having faith are

.Faith makes people be trusted by their fellow beings ●

.Faith corrects man's thoughts ●

.It makes man interpret and account for his life ●

It ●

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.makes man morally dependent

.Faith has man abandon personal desires and turn to serving people socially ●

.It provides man with internal, constant liveliness ●

.Man finds innate dignity and elegance through faith ●

Faith makes man himself carry the heavy load of his life instead of imposing it upon ● .others

.With faith, man is freed of mental anxieties and worries ●

.Faith helps man accomplish great achievements ●

.It makes man feel greatness in the universe, and observe moral principles ●

If man's faith in God makes him constantly pay attention to God, he will always admit

that God is watching him, and if man accepts God's continual supervision of what he :does, the results will be

.Man will spend every moment of his life seeing God before him -۱

Man will act upon devotion and commitment, for he has realized without doubt that -۲ .only God – and nothing else – can deserve to be man's goal in his deeds

.Man will make savings for his eternity in this world -۳

Man will avoid forbidden actions – even if they are not sins, like unsuitable actions -۴ .or deeds based upon imagination or hallucinations

.Man will not waste his life -۵

It is only through recognizing God's constant supervision that man can harness his -۶ .lusts and desires

.Such a man will realize that every action of his in this world leads to reactions -۷

این جهان کوه است و فعل ما ندا سوی ما آید نداها را صدا

(,This world is like a mountain

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(.and our actions are shouts; their reactions come back to us

(Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi

Man will give up his far-reaching wishes, and will not allow baseless illusions - ۸ .replace facts and realities

.God's supervision makes man be patient and tolerant toward events -۹

.Man will regard piety as the tool to pass the bridge of death -۱۰

Man tries to keep moving on the right path amidst all the dangerous cliffs and - ۱۱

.deviating ways full of thorns during his life

Man considers every moment and aspect of his life as precious and valuable, and -۱۲ .will not let apparently-fatalistic events disturb his life

:Such a man will adjust his life in a way that it seems he is on the verge of death

Man's Mental States during Worship

.When worshipping God, man may be in a state of fear or a state of flourish and joy

Basically, man's mental state depends on his viewpoint of his position in the universe. If he does not see himself as of great meaning in the universe, his mental state will also suffer from meaninglessness; if, however, he interprets his life as related to the origin of the universe and regard his development and progress as due to God's kindness, he will always remember God, and his worship will be in an elevated mental .state

Of course, human beings differ in their degree of development and progress, and those who have achieved high levels of development intuitively see God while worshipping. This is why some perfected human beings weep strangely in their worship. It has been

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said, for example, that Imam Ali writhed like a snake when he worshipped God in the .dark night

When man pays attention to God's qualities of greatness and beauty, he will be in a state of hope; if man considers qualities of God's power and anger, he will feel fear of :God. The reasons for fear of God can be

Fear of the results and consequences of the sins man has committed; sins make -۱ the soul deteriorate and become evil, and developed man cannot remain insensitive .about that

Fear of the fact that man may not have put the blessings and potentials God has -۲ .given him to correct use

Fear of the significance and glory of the meaning of the universe and man's -۳ .existence in it

Fear of God, i.e. realizing God's immense glory and His absolute dominance over -۴ .the universe; such a realization can fill man with awe and intimidation

Fear of God's great, divine position, which makes man realize how absolutely -۵ dependent he is upon God – the originator of the universe – and this makes man .terrified of disobeying God

Since man has extremely numerous and diverse aspects, and God's qualities are also endless, man can thus make contact with a divine quality with each of his mental aspects, and each contact will lead to a different mental phenomenon. For example, if man feels God's absolute dominance as the Creator of the universe, he will realize the glory of God. And since

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God is constantly dominant over the whole universe, man will always feel that God, .the extreme witness and supervisor, watches his every move and behavior

Such a feeling is itself a special mental phenomenon, and realizing the fact that God is the absolute just and has accurately calculated every single detail about the universe and all of man's deeds and words, man will acquire a feeling of how just and fair God is. Furthermore, when man realizes that God has created man to bestow him with kindness, and is affectionate and merciful toward man, and when man realizes God's .brilliant beauty by means of intuition, he will have a feeling of high joy

?Is Religion a Personal Matter

Some Western thinkers have regarded religion as a persona; spiritual state irrelevant .to all elements of life

We must say that mismanagement on behalf of churches and other places of worship has led to this kind of viewpoint about religion, which should, in fact, provide man with awareness of himself, which leads to awareness about the universe, and eventually :development on the path of intelligible life. As Iqbal Lahouri says

چیست دین؟ برخاستن از روی خاک تا که آگه گردد از خود جان پاک

What is religion? It is rising from the earth – this world – so that you can be aware of) (.your pure soul

If various educational systems used religion to develop the human character, such .thoughts would have never arisen

As we know, man needs to find answers to the six basic

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questions: Who am I? Where have I come from? Who am I with? Where have I come to? Where do I go from here? Why am I here? It is only religion that can provide him .with the answers

Those thinkers and intellectuals, who separate religion from man's life and try to confine it to something personal, are in fact throwing man into countless aspects of nervous and spiritual retardation; such people would only think about God on Saturdays or Sundays, never taking God into consideration in any other parts of their .lives

The Origins of Defying Divine Commandments

The factors that make man disobey God and defy the worship God has obliged His :subjects to carry out are

Ignorance and incapability: Those who suffer from mental handicap do not know – ۱ that God exists, and have no blame; how, on the other hand, can someone of sound brain and spirit see all the discipline and harmony in the universe and ignore its ?source

Neglect toward God: Some people ignore the supreme level of divinity, for they are -۲ .drowned in their lusts and desires

An illusion of independence: Some people do not understand the necessity of - ۳ having a relationship with God and obeying His orders, so they believe themselves to .be independent. This is the most degraded form of conceit and selfishness

If man is aware that God exists, if man realizes how great and glorious God is, and if man understands that without contact with God he can never reach the supreme aim of life, he will not avoid

.worshipping God

Devotion

point

:There are two kinds of devotion

Devotion in a general meaning: Regarding a fact as innately desirable, whether the -۱ fact or reality has an aspect of merit or not, like power, wealth, ethnic characteristics, science and freedom. Such a form of devotion is not a value or a merit, and cannot .develop the human character

Devotion in a specific meaning: Regarding a fact that if achieved potentials and - ۲ .talents are activated as innately desirable

Devotion in the first meaning inflates man's natural ego, and throws him into grief. It is meritorious devotion, however, that can bring about man's development and .perfection

The greatest of all meritorious form of devotion that is the base of other valuable kinds of devotion is devotion to God. When man is devoted to God, he is aware of .what is proper and appropriate to man, and progresses toward gaining them

In fact, if something is to be innately desirable to man, it must be a reality that can make all of man's potentials flourish. It should be in accordance with man's sound .logic, nature and his psychic observations about God

Since complete devotion causes the true elixir of man's soul to flourish, there will be .irreparable damage if such devotion is given to something other than God

Devotion to God brings about being devoted to all realities and facts of merit and value. If man acquires a certain kind of knowledge with devotion for God, for instance, the knowledge will be innately desirable. Or, if man acts with justice

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in all aspects of his life with devotion to God, he will enjoy both the individual and .social benefits of justice and its divine aspect, too

:The Characteristics of Valuable Devotion

۱ - Value-based devotion is not compatible with selfishness or egotism, for no supreme reality can become innately desirable to man unless the natural self is .moderated

۲ - -Like true love, devotion based on value and merit is the strongest factor of self .possession – a perfectionist human being's greatest ideal of all

۳- Value-based devotion provides man with tranquility. When man's soul is devoted to .a supreme reality, he is also guiding himself toward the highest aim of life

۴ - Devotion helps man concentrate his mental and psychic forces and guards him .against baseless hallucinations and soul-damaging temptations

۵ - Being devoted to a supreme reality makes man's attention to it change .dramatically. Devotion for something makes all other facts and realities fade away

۶- Devotion has two values – an innate, dispositional value and a value as a means. Its innate, dispositional value involves "the desirability of devotion itself which purifies

".man's relationship with the desired truth of all contaminating factors and selfishness

Its value as a means, on the other hand, consists of the innate desirable that attracts .the soul. The most valuable form of devotion is the one that attracts man toward God

۷- When man considers something as desirable, his entire character is attracted to it, and he accounts for and justifies his whole life based on it. Since devotion, as an innately desirable thing, makes man choose his path

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in life, man must make great effort to choose a reality as his goal that is really worth .being devoted to

۸- Devotion is a bipolar mental development – it has innately external and innately internal poles. Its internal pole consists of man's tendency toward a reality that is considered as innately desirable. Its external pole consists of the reality that is innately desirable to man. Such a reality should be able to activate all of man's .potentials and aspects

۹- .In value-based devotion man deals with everything logically

One of the most fundamental characteristics of value-based devotion reveals itself when the desired reality shows its true face and attracts the soul; it's not that it cannot hear the disagreeing sounds or cannot see the protestors, or that it does not confront those who conflict with the reality. If it can, it defeats the protestors and destroys those who fight reality and righteousness; if it fails to do so, it continues on .its way without the least attention or influence from them

۱۰ -.Having devotion in one's thoughts, deeds and speech purifies man's inside. Devotion in thoughts makes realities able to be received by man intuitively, and prevents the facts from being contaminated by hallucinations and illusions. Pure and devoted speech also keeps man away from deceitful words. Devoted deeds are the .soul of deeds, and builds up man's existence on the path of intelligible life

Having God in Mind

Remembering God at all times has various effects and benefits. Let us point out some :of them

Faith in -۱

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God makes one always have God in mind. When one has faith in God, he sees nothing in the whole universe worth remembering and calling but God. When God infiltrates .man's heart, there will be no more room for anything else at all

Remembering God creates a special spiritual state in man which safeguards him -۲ from falling for worldly and materialistic affairs. This spiritual state makes man's life become meaningful and logical, his purely natural life will be replaced by intelligible .life

Remembering God makes man fresh, and keeps him safe from the sorrow of the -۳ disorders that occur in purely natural life. Likewise, it does not allow the relative joys .of purely natural life spoil the secret of human character

Remembering God removes all temptations, imaginations and mental illusions, -۴ .safeguarding the human mind and soul from being baselessly exhausted and used up

Remembering God adjusts man's mental and psychic activities, and his existence -۵ will illuminate. The tranquility that remembering God creates in man will balance his :entire existence. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) says

این قدر گفتیم، باقی فکر کن فکر گر راکد بود، رو ذکر کن

ذکر آرد فکر را در اهتزاز ذکر را خورشید این افسرده ساز

Now go and think about the rest, and if your thoughts lead nowhere, remember God) and call out for him, for that will elevate your thoughts. It will be like a sun you're your thoughts are down and

(.depressed

Remembering God prevents man's character from being decomposed into the - ۶ scattered components of this world; instead, by means of realizing the rules governing the universe and gaining complete knowledge of it, man will find a certain .tranquility, and feel that he is always close to God

Remembering God makes God's will start to purify and illuminate man internally, - ۷ .and man's positive internal potentials will flourish

Remembering God frees man from all his imagining and hallucinating, and makes - ۸ him speak of things that he will really act upon. Remembering God leads to living and .speaking realistically

Remembering God is a path to reach the truth and benefit from man's internal - ۹ treasures. Remembering God makes God reveal some realities and secrets to man as .a reward for remembering Him

Remembering God leads to the knowledge of God's glorious blessings. Deep - ۱۰ thought about God's blessings guides man toward constant remembrance of and .calling out for God

Remembering God makes man never weaken in the battle on the boundary of life - ۱۱ and death. Those who remember God in a battlefield never forget God's rules and .Godly values

Remembering God is the strongest builder of human nature. Calling God's name is a comprehensive book including all the chapters of mental and spiritual development .and training, a divine trainer and teacher that accompanies man day and night

The Conditions for Calling and Remembering God

Of course, this does not mean merely utterances from the mouth; saying the word without

considering what it means is worthless. In other words, attention to the meaning is the essential preliminary. Remembering God in one's heart also needs the attention of .the soul

Man must remember God when his soul is eager to do so, not when he is forced to • externally. And when an action becomes like a habit, it will be something compulsory, with little interference on behalf of man's free will. We must keep in mind that the habit of remembering and calling God should not be in a way that makes it deft man's .free will and awareness

Man should act and behave in accordance with his remembering God. If someone • .says "God is great," he must not drown in selfishness, greed for power or wealth

Remembering God must be considered as the factor that activates man's heavenly • soul, not a tool for self-conceit. Man should not remember God in order to remove his frustrations over a monotonous life. It should not be the means for performing .extraordinary acts either, like what ascetics do

Divine Justice

:The principles that make up our viewpoints on divine justice are

The universe is orderly and harmonious. Otherwise, there would be no laws either, -۱ for laws are general theorems that arise out of the harmony and discipline in the world. We cannot understand the role of divine justice in the universe without .accepting the existence of order, discipline and harmony

The creatures in the world can be divided into two groups. First, creatures that are -۲

alive, and have a "self" (an ego) of their own, and second, creatures that are not alive, .and submit to the flow of nature

Order and harmony, where divine justice manifests itself, is different in the two -۳ mentioned groups of creatures. Something that applies to a living creature as a law may not be applicable to a non-living one. For instance, reproduction and avoiding unsuitable habitats is a law for living creatures, but for lifeless creatures it can be a .violation of law and order

Justice is equal to order and harmony for creatures that have a 'self.' When we -۴ come to harmony, law and orderliness for the universe (that has a 'self'), we are in .fact speaking of justice

When the human mind sees the universe, it sees the order and harmony it includes, -۵ but when it comes to creatures in the world, the concept of order and harmony fades, and concepts like joy and sorrow and justice and atrocity arise. Likewise, when discussing the issue of man and human relationships, we come to concepts such as right and wrong, good and evil, and justice and atrocity become deeper and clearer to .us

The more developed, deeper and more diluted the "self' (the ego) is, the more accurate and profound its imagination of justice and atrocity will be. A well-developed self will expect a higher level of justice from himself and others, and – at the highest level – from God, and if man were to picture justice himself and

.make it come true, it would be justice at its supreme level

Each human being defines justice based on his/her own knowledge and tendencies. -۶ As Tolstoy says, "When a child is stung by a bee, it might think that bees live only to sting people; a beehive keeper, on the other hand, believes that bees live to gather honey, and to a poet, who enjoys watching bees on flowers, will see bees' mission as extracting nectar from flowers, and a botanist will call it fertilizing flowers. This example shows how diverse viewpoints can be. Man may look upon justice from .various points of view, and reach diverse interpretations

۷- Normal people associate justice with natural tendencies, but developed human beings see the root of justice in ideal tendencies. People like Napoleon and Tamberlaine see divine order and justice in there being nothing inhibiting their triumph and victory; however, developed human beings interpret justice not in regard to their own desires; they believe that the universe is based on order and harmony, and does not proceed in accordance with man's wishes. Thus, we must say that the more developed man is, and the deeper and more accurate his observations are, the more his view of justice will shine.

۸- If man had abstract perception and had no sense of joy or sorrow, he would never think about justice, for then his mind would be like a mirror, reflecting everything equally; a human being's painful suffering would sound like the exquisitely beautiful bird singing.

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It is the feeling of pain and joy, the pleasure of joy and inconvenience of pain and sorrow that makes man see true justice in the fact that "everything, throughout all of life, be pleasant and good," and the utmost pain and atrocity be regarded as suffering from pain at one point of the life of living things.

۹- Since joy and pain depends on a variety of changeable factors dominating the world of creatures, man assumes an average level of justice to use as his criterion for assessing justice and interpreting it. Such a viewpoint makes some people consider death – even after a lifetime of ۱۰,۰۰۰ years – as contradictory to divine justice. They expect all people to be as handsome as Joseph and as fair and just as Imam Ali, and be able to conquer like Napoleon and travel around the globe like Alexander. Such a state of mind shows how intensely playful the human mind is.

۱۰- If man takes a clear look at the universe, he will see the order and harmony in it, but if he attempts to interpret the universe from merely a natural point of view, he will fail to see any divine justice in the universe. Thus, we should be true observers, and eliminate all of our natural tendencies. In other words, we must change our natural tendencies into ideal ones. If that happens, the bitternesses and inconveniences we

.suffer will not make us protest to divine justice

This is why the great

men of history have tolerated cruelty and torture, and never had the least doubt in God's justice. If Imam Ali had a natural viewpoint as his spiritual guidelines, even a thousandth of the amount of cruelty and torture he bore was enough to make him .skeptical about the whole universe and all of mankind, and defy divine justice

Man's big mistake is losing ideal tendency, which makes him fail to fulfill his duty -۱۱ entirely and eventually fall into doubt about divine justice. When man achieves the supreme 'self,' attaining development and perfection, he can find with internal intuition that divine laws call for him to relieve others from pain and suffering. When man is at the level of natural tendencies, however, he does not think of the relief of others; all he thinks about is himself. Thus, being content with what there is, and watching God's geometry – in which human lives play the most important part of its .illustration – being deformed is in fact fighting against divine justice

:Man's endeavors and actions can be divided into two basic groups -۱۲

.a) Things man does out of his free will

b) Non-voluntary actions that occur without the supervision and dominance of the human character. These actions are like the actions and movements seen in animals and other living creatures. All of the voluntary or non-voluntary actions of man and other living creatures affect the universe. In other words, the general destiny or interpretation of the universe is the product of various

.actions and fixed and changeable affairs

Elaborating on physical and mental inconveniences and defections: we should first -۱۳ :discuss two important issues

a) Imperfect life: The handicaps and disabilities seen in some people and the pain and suffering they undergo is regarded as imperfect life.

b) The flame of life going out: When some living creatures, or even human beings, are destroyed in the fight for survival, it is a sign of the fire of life being put out.

There are several points we must mention concerning the relationship these issues have with divine justice:

a) The source and origin of the universe has no need for favoritism or unfairness. So the inconveniences seen in the creatures in the universe cannot be due to that.

b) It cannot be imagined that God acts cruelly. "Because cruelty happens when the object cruelty is done upon is somehow beyond the ability of the oppressor to conquer; there must be some issue or law absent in the cruel one to make it commit the cruelty. On the other hand, we know that all creatures are absolutely under control and possession of God, with all their laws and affairs."

c) The base and foundation of life gives the same importance to the minimum level of life as it does to the highest level.

Serious defense of life indicates that the important thing is true life itself, not its time length. The absence of some of the characteristics or means of life does not make it bad. All creatures endeavor to make their

life flourish and go on, and prevent any factor that tends to inhibit that. Wishing for death or tending toward suicide does not arise out of the origins of true life; it is despair and social problems that cause them. The flame of life being put out does not conflict with divine justice, for both the cruel and the oppressed ones' free will also has a part.

۱۴ - Feelings of evil, imperfection, and disorder in creation is due to man's limited thoughts and viewpoints; when discussing such imperfections we must always keep

:these three points in mind

.a) There is a difference between the universe and discovering the universe

b) The order, harmony and discipline that governs the universe has not been .established in accordance with man's wishes

.c) God's position is too great for us to be able to know about it completely

The life-oriented viewpoint means that man's only criterion in determining the rules of the universe is considered his own wishes and desires; however, many of man's wishes and desires can never be fulfilled. In other words, when studying the imperfections of the universe, we use standards that pertain to our own observations .and desires, and practical reasons can never confirm them

Handicapped or disabled people – though having become disabled or handicapped due to natural reasons and causes – never feel hatred for life, for life is the incredible phenomenon that man will always want to continue, unless a mental or spiritual blow .is delivered onto it

I once visited a nursing home

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for deaf and mute people in Isfehan, Iran, in order to study their handicaps and disabilities. I arranged with the officials of the nursing home, who were dear friends of mine, that I watch and observe the children and young people there alone for a while, so that I could have a better chance of seeing how their mental and spiritual state .was considering the handicap they also had

The result was quite near to what I had expected – they did not feel any suffering or defection due to their deafness or muteness, and their behavior clearly showed that they were not dissatisfied with their lives. There was no indication of feeling disabled or imperfect in how they played, treated each other or even others. I also studied young people who were paralyzed or crippled. I was amazed to see that they had no

sadness or depression when they were alone, or were playing. They looked exactly like other, normal young people. So, it is obvious that life is the astonishing, incredible reality that will go on trying to survive, even if it means mere existence – unless, of course, man's own soul delivers it a crippling blow.

The Rule of Kind Favors

There are several preliminary explanations on the rule of kind favors:

1- Creating man has no benefit for God, and avoids no harm from God, either; God is too great to need anything or anybody to help Him.

2- Humans have been created so that their character can be developed. In other words, God

has set a perfect existence for man, and wants man to reach it.

3- Man is not perfect when he is born.

4- Man cannot achieve the desired perfection that is considered as his aim without endeavor.

5- Not all kinds of endeavor can guide man to perfection; the endeavor that is based upon conscience and reason, and is supported by divine sermons given by prophets can do that.

6- The above-mentioned principles can flow through two kinds of affairs:

a) Non-voluntary affairs: Affairs that influence man's fate although he can do nothing to change them, like being born, having certain instincts, having wisdom and conscience, hereditary backgrounds, social and geographical conditions, etc. These non-voluntary affairs are related to God's justice, for if we suppose that the aim of creating man (evolution and improving and developing the human character) is related to these non-voluntary affairs, there is no way except God's justice to adjust

.them

b) Voluntary affairs: These affairs also influence man's fate. Non-voluntary affairs are .related to God's justice, but these affairs are up to man himself

Now we can present a definition of kindness: Kindness consists of a certain effect of -۷ God's justice that motivates man in the boundaries of lack of clarity, and can be .voluntary or non-voluntary

The Consequences of the Rule of Kind Favors

:The following four conclusions can be made from the rule of kind favors

.All the divine knowledge man can gain comes from the rule of kind favors -۱

According to the rule of kind favors, there is a series of duties and instructions - ۲ which must be

.fulfilled if the human character is to develop

.The necessity to appoint leaders arises from the rule of kind favors -۳

The acceptance of the overall opinion of jurisprudential scholars, which is one of - ۴ the sources of jurisprudence, is also based upon the rule of kind favors, for the rule of kindness says God prevents the leaders of a school of thoughts from falling into error – when the scholars confer, there is either disagreement or agreement, and the .leader is in one of these two groups

The Relationship between God and His Creatures

Ever since a long time ago, the relationship between “the existence that has to be” and “the existence that can be” – the creator and the creature – has been subject to debate. Since man gets most of his philosophical and scientific input from nature, he cannot discover exactly the relationship between God and the universe. Most of the material at hand on the subject is also mere personal ideas or literary metaphors that

,satisfy just a few. As the famous Iranian poet Sheikh Mahmoud Shabestari says

عدم آیینه، عالم عکس و انسان چو چشم عکس در وی شخص پنهان

تو چشم عکسی و او نور دیده است به دیده دیده، را دیده که دیده است؟

جهان انسان شد و انسان جهانی از این پاکیزهتر نبود بیانی

Absent is the mirror, and the universe is like a reflection. Someone)

is hidden in him, like the eye of the reflection. You are the eye of the reflection, and He is the light of the eyes; who has ever seen that true light with his/her eyes? Indeed, man becomes the universe, and the universe becomes man can it be worded any (.better than that

The universe being a picture of God in the mirror of oblivion is merely a metaphor, for oblivion is not a thing to be able to reflect the truth. Can infinity ever be reflected ?within finite components

The relation we use in order to discover the relationship between God and the universe – the cause-and-effect relation – is not accurate. The law of causality is derived from things in this world, associating things with one another, but God cannot be compared to things found in nature. Normally, causes consist of a subject cause .and also a material cause, whereas God, a subject cause, needs no material cause

Things in this world occupy space and time in regard to one another, but God does not; His position is high above others. Thus, the concepts we conclude from the phenomena and effects in nature cannot be used to interpret God's relationship with .the universe

Man can see the relationship between God and nature by referring to his own self, his own nature, for though the human soul and body interact, they are not at all one of a kind. Likewise, although God created this world, He had no need for materiality. The

.human soul can invent imaginations that are not comparable with it at all

The Relationship between God and His Creatures in the Qur’an

The Holy Qur’an mentions different forms of relationships between God and the universe. We can categorize them into ten groups:

۱- Surrounding: The Qur’an believes that God surrounds and dominates everything, material or abstract.

و کان الله بکل شی محیطا

“And God encompasses everything.”(۴:۱۲۶)

God dominates and surrounds everything, both in knowledge and in existence, like the human soul which controls its entire actions.

۲- Establishing: The universe has its strength and foundation from God. God has established the universe, like man's existence is founded upon his soul.

الله لا اله الا هو الحی القیوم

“God, there is no god but He, the Living, the Everlasting.” (۲:۲۵۵)

۳- Accompaniment: God is with all creatures. This does not mean physically near; it is a relationship of soul with physique, far beyond time and place.

و هو معکم اینما کنتم

“He is with you, wherever you are.” (۲۰:۱۱۱)

۴- Creation and Production: Various verses in the Qur’an refer to this form of relation:

لا اله هو خالق کل شی فاعبدوه

“That then is God your Lord; there is no God but He, the creator of everything. So

(serve Him."(۶:۱۰۲

Absolute Possession: Here, possession does not mean conventional or credit-based -۵ ownership; we are referring to true possession. God's possession of creatures refers to the facts that God gave them their existence. It is similar to the relationship .between the intellect and its creations

Protection: This is one of the most important issues in theology, for normally people -۶ think that God has created everything

and then left them on their own, whereas God is always protective of the universe .and everything in it

ان ربی علی کل شی حفیظ

(Verily, my Creator and Nurturer is the Protector over all things." (۱۱:۵۷"

.I believe God is the protector and keeper of laws," Einstein has said"

As we know, laws have no observable reality in the world; there is order and harmony in the external world, and from that laws are abstracted. It is God's will that makes .events continue in a fixed, orderly fashion

Creation and Nurture: Over ۱۰۰۰ verses in the Qur'an emphasize this form of - ۷ .relationship

و هو رب کل شی

(And He is the Creator-Nurturer of everything." (۶:۶۴"

According to this relationship, the creator – or nurturer – constantly dominates and .takes care of its creations

.Worship: Everything worships God -۸

ان کل من فی السموات و الارض الا اتی الرحمن عبدا

Nothing is there in the heavens and earth but it comes to the All-merciful as a"
(servant. " (۱۹:۹۳

.Here, worship means complete submission of all creatures to God's will

.Divinity: God is the absolute dominant upon all levels and basics of the universe -۹

فسبحان الذی بیده ملکوت کل شی و الیه ترجعون

So glory be to Him, in whose hand is the dominion of everything, and unto whom you"
(shall be returned." (۳۶:۸۳

Here, "malakoot" in this verse refers to the supernatural picture of all things, for the
:human "ego" has two faces

a) The observable, created face

b) The supernatural face

This face of the universe describes the relationship between divine absolute ownership and the

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supernatural face, nullifying the thoughts of some philosophers who believe that God
.has no control or dominance over the fundamentals of the universe

:Light: As the Holy Qur'an says -۱۰

الله نور السموات و الارض

(God is the light of the heavens and the earth."(۲۴:۳۵"

This verse explains both the existence of God and God's dominance and control over the whole universe. God exists in the universe, illuminating it without becoming connected or united with it, just like light which penetrates into transparent things

.without becoming part of them

?Fatalism and Free Will: Which Is the Truth

point

The most fundamental principle governing man's life is his "desire for life", his efforts toward safeguarding, and preserving his "self". Affection for one's own self leads to emotions such as joy and grief, which in turn classify every object as useful or .harmful

:Four other factors should be mentioned here

Variable external factors include things we interact with every day and night by -۱ means of our senses, such as beautiful or unpleasant scenes, various colors, shapes, smells and sounds, which can all have an influence on man's soul. The human soul, however, is capable of putting up a resistance toward them and even neutralizing .them

Constant external factors also form the components and relationships of man's life, -۲ such as weather conditions, living environment, geographical factors and social customs and traditions. These factors are capable of affecting some of man's activities. For instance, if curiosity, one of man's primary instincts, is surrounded solely by agricultural economies, it might well begin to dwell into issues

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.concerning land and agriculture

Variable internal factors are phenomena created by the human soul without - ۳ needing any action or contact with any outside factors. Thoughts, speculations, and imagination are examples of these factors, which play a significant role in man's .spiritual affairs

Constant internal factors: include the positive and negative points of talents, - ۴ intelligence, memory, will power, decision, instincts, curiosity, and feelings like hunger,

.thirst and fatigue

:In general, we consider these three factors to be effective in man's moves

,"a) His affection for his own "self

,b) Attracting joy and repelling grief, which derive from man's interest in himself

.c) The four above-mentioned factors

The point fatalists claim here is that all of man's affairs derive from his love for his own self and its results, and this cannot be possible unless these factors are considered absolutely necessary. Some, including Hume and supporters of new physics have denied the law of causation in attempt to justify free will. We must say .that the principle of causality does not conflict with man's free will

The cause and the effect are not always alike in type – this is why physicists have mistakenly thought the principle of causality is thus defied. However, accepting the principle of causality does not imply that all phenomena are of the same type, especially the intrinsic actions of nature. Thus, there should be a distinction between .applying the principle of causality in the internal world and the external world

The Characteristics of Will

Will is one of the phenomenon man and animals have in -۱

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:common, except for two differences

The range of gaining what is advantageous and repelling what is harmful is quite vaster in man than in animals, where it is limited to the physical life. What is to man's advantage or to his harm, on the other hand, goes far beyond the physical aspect. Man likes to solve scientific problems, likes justice, and endeavors to make his ideas .and thoughts embrace reality, but animals cannot do such things

Man has "self", "soul", "character" and "conscience." It is not possible to prove that

animals have them. Furthermore, … do animals feel the spiritual state we have when we use our will? It is immensely hard to prove whether they do or do not – particularly when we realize, as we will further on in this book, that human will has a great deal of .various aspects

Will is not always an extensive phenomenon. Its simplicity or complexity depends -۲ on the simplicity or complexity of the subject it focuses on. If the subject is complex, will can also be regarded as complex. For instance, if we want to draw a flower, since the flower consists of different parts, the will to draw it would also ramify into various branches. However, the multiplicity or complexity of will is qualitative, not .quantitative

Will can be strong or weak, depending on whether its motive is strong or weak. The -۳ .stronger the motive, therefore, the stronger the will is

.Will is a tool for the "self" to achieve its goal -۴

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Thus, the reason for actions is not tendency or eagerness. Some classical philosophers and psychologists attempt to find the reason for actions in will, but that is not possible. They have mistaken the main destination which has motivated our .journey with the means that will get us there

Another one of the characteristics of will is that will is not a single phenomenon, but -۵ consists of various phenomena. Many intellectuals of the past and some of their contemporary successors have considered will to be a singular phenomenon, :whereas we believe it to be diverse for two reasons

:a) The causes and motives of will, which are of three types

- .Pleasing factors
- .Escaping pain
- .Love for the self

Since the motives of will are diverse, will itself has variety, too. For example, joy and .sorrow have different kinds, therefore the will it results in will also differ

b) Since the "self" and also its characteristics and activities are different, so are the .activities man does based on his will

The Difference between Tendency and Will

By tendency we mean the initial wanting that has not yet become strong; will, on the other hand, refers to the wanting and eagerness that has become quite strong, an .extremely important means to carry out an action

The reason for making a distinction between tendency and will is the fact that we may tend to do many things, but we never actually take action, for we do not have the needed devices, tools or knowledge about its consequences. Defining a clear-cut boundary

.between tendency and will, however, is extremely tedious, of not impossible

Classical philosophy believes that free will arose after will power did. Philosophers :consider these factors as influential to actions

Understanding and desiring the goal -١

Studying and contemplating the pros and cons -٢

Attention to the means needed to get us to the end -٣

Eagerness -۴

Will power -۵

Determination -۶

Free will -٧

The philosophers' treatment of the issue is insufficient, for here rises the significant .question whether free will arises before will power, after it or not at all

The virtue of the subject does not necessarily imply that the action is definitely done. Man does each and every actions in certain, different conditions and situations; therefore, the needed motive has a critical role here. Not everything can serve as the motivating factor. A motive must remove from the subject what is to its disadvantage, or bring it what is advantageous. The mere existence of a goal cannot bring about :actions. The three phenomena that influence actions based on free will are

.a) The will to do it

.b) The decision to do it

".c) The supervision and governance of the "self

They are not enough, however, for the action to be carried out. In other words, none of the subject, the goal, will power, determination or free will can virtually be the real cause for the action – two wills, two determinations and the supervision of two ."selves" are needed in free will-based actions

The Difference between Will and Determination

In the past, intellectuals did not consider will power and determination to be any different; they

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only believed that immense willingness can bring about actions. However, there are a few important differences between them, and that determination is the amplified :form of will power

a) We often feel that we have the will power to do something, but there is no indication of decision in us. The tendency may even become quite strong, but we do .not decide to carry it out for fear of failure

b) There are different kinds of will, but decision is no more than one single truth. For example, the decision to fulfill the instincts of curiosity and emotions is the same, .whereas the will behind them serves to make different forms of benefit become true

c) Will, as the eagerness to do things, can also pertain to impossible actions, but it is not possible to decide to do them. For example, we can wish to gain all the knowledge .in the universe and become immortal, but it is impossible to decide to do so

The Quanta of Will

Classical philosophers and psychologists believed that will arises constantly in the human psyche and depicts the path to carrying out or avoiding and action. However, when the will is carrying out an action, it can be considered as consisting of small parts we may call the "quanta of will." As an example, although an artist has a general will – creating a beautiful painting – the painting itself consists of many tiny parts, for each .of which there is a certain will

?Is the Will Free

Some attribute freedom or fatalism to the will. They

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claim, for instance, that if they did something, they must have had the freedom of will to do so. We must disregard such beliefs; we cannot attribute freedom to the will. Will, whether in its strong or weak level, does not have freedom. In other words, "we have no freedom of will power, for will is an internal, psychological activity caused by one of ".our instincts

In fact, the will depends on our motives. The will has no freedom of its own; its freedom comes from the supervision of the "self." Without the "self" governing it, will has no power at all. Although we have the will power to do the things we are free to do, we are not free to do only whatever there is the will to do; compulsory actions also .have will power in them

The “supervision of the self” is of utmost significance in discussing man's freedom. As we know, apart from instincts and other psychological aspects, man possesses a truth that has been called his “self,” his “psyche,” his “soul,” and also his “spirit.” For several .reasons, the “self” cannot be man's total external and internal components

The “self” has several characteristics. One of them is the fact that “It can govern all, or a majority, of the instincts. In other words, it can observe the activities of the instincts, justify them, or even prevent them.” The self has the capability to control or stop the 'instincts. In brief, the supervision and dominance of the 'self

over the internal resistance forces and other mechanical ones that motivate actions are the source of free will-based actions. The greater the supervision and dominance .is, the stronger the free will be

The Levels of Free Will

Another significant issue concerning fatalism and free will is the levels free will has. Since it is dependent upon the supervision and dominance of the “self,” and that can vary from one person to another, free will should also fall into different levels of intensity. If one's self is stronger, he will also have a stronger free will, and will not be much influenced by external or internal mechanical factors. When one's self is weak in its supervision and dominance, on the other hand, he will do fewer things at free will, and be more affected by mechanical factors. Ignorance towards the different levels of the supervision and dominance of the “self” has led to problems in the issue of .fatalism and free will

The problem we encounter here is that by accepting the supervision and the dominance of the “self,” we have no choice but to choose one of the two extremes; choosing each, however, will mean that there is a preference in the reasons, and .when we assume a reason influential, free will is meaningless

In response, we must say that the preferred factor does not defy the supervision and the dominance of the “self,” for if a motive makes the self-use its control to have an

action performed, the other choice must not also be possible. However, we

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can prove for these three reasons that when the self-governs a choice, the other alternative is also not eliminated. The first reason is that if choosing the second alternative is impossible when choosing the first one, why would man show ?repentance after the first one proves a failure

Secondly, in many of our actions, as each second of our internal activity passes, the next second does not impose itself on us completely; in other words, we feel, subsequent to the next second, that although we may proceed, we are able to .terminate the activity at any moment

The third reason is the doubt man feels sometimes, putting him in a quandary, hesitant to choose alternative A or B. Making the decision calls for patience and thought; the fact that man becomes doubtful and needs to think whether to choose A ".or B shows that none of them impose themselves upon the "self

The Three Fundamental Principles in Proving Free Will

If we accept these three principles, we will certainly accept the phenomenon called .free will

The dominance and supervision of the "self" over the positive and negative poles of -۱ (the action (acceptance or avoidance to carry it out

The factors that make man carry out an action, are not so as absolutely motivating -۲ to eliminate the supervision of the self. When performing our will-based actions, we often to not wait to make sure whether the end or the outcome is acceptable and desirable or not; in other words, we take action before we are sure that we will .succeed

The gradual -۳

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.demise of the will and its vulnerability to any of the external or internal factors

The Steps toward Making Free Will–based Actions Come True

The steps philosophers of the past believed was necessary in order to a free will-based action to be carried out was:

Focusing on the goal and desiring it -۱

Focusing on the action and its feasibility -۲

Judging the pros and cons of doing or avoiding the action -۳

Willingness and tendency to do it -۴

The will to carry it out -۵

Deciding to do it -۶

Free will and option -۷

:These steps are not correct, because

First: Some people believe that the pros and cons of the goal itself are more important than the pros and cons of the action. Some, on the contrary, consider the judgment in favor of the action of more significance. Others consider both of them as equally .important

Second: Some people make the most efforts possible to evaluate the goal and the .action; some others follow a purely Machiavellian procedure

Third: In some people, there is an extremely short interval between tendency, will and decision; once they focus on the desirability of the goal, they immediately express their tendency, will and decision. In some others, on the other hand, there is a fairly .long time between tendency and will, or between will and decision

Fourth: Some people break their will at the least shadow of a doubt; in some others,

.the doubt is fought for a long time, and the will is preserved

In a word, the conflicts of the “self,” its internal struggles and the conflicts its motivating factors suffer

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from, prevent us from discovering or finding a general rule. In other words, determining a place for free will in the preliminary steps of the action is almost obscured, for the three principles that form human free will differ from one human being to another, so free will strengthens and weakens, and may reveal itself in the .preliminaries or the action itself

Two Kinds of Will, Decision and Supervision in Actions based on Free Will

:There are two different kinds of will in free will-based actions

۱- The will pertaining to the goal

۲- The will pertaining to the action

For example, if our goal is to plant something in the ground, there is both the will for .the goal and also the will to carry out the preliminary steps toward the action

Sometimes there is one decision for the goal and another for the action in actions based on free will. At other times, since the goal is not under direct access by man, the decision for the goal is unclear, but decision to do the action exists. For example, if an artist decides to paint a beautiful picture with the purpose of selling it at a high price, the decision to paint the picture falls into his free will, but the real purpose – people .liking the painting and buying it at a high price – does not, it is not at his direct will

The supervision and dominance of the self in optional actions like decision-making pertains to both the goal and to the action itself, and sometimes it pertains to the action only, for the

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.goal is always directly under access and free will of man

Both forms of the three mentioned phenomena – decision, will and the supervision of the self – are not of the same kind, for the will to do the action means asking for the tools needed, but the will pertaining to the goal is independent. The will to do the action is dependent on the goal. For instance, the goal may be interesting to man, but the action itself may be not. The will to do the action depends on the will of the goal, for no action can be desirable to man unless the goal is accepted by the human soul. This is why the mental and spiritual changes we undergo concerning the goal can also change our mental state about the action itself, for the less interest we have in the .goal, the will to do the action will also decrease

Apart from the above mentioned, there are also other reasons for the necessity of :man's free will, which we will discuss now

Imagination and induction: One of the reasons for the existence of man's free will is -۱ the power of inculcation and imagination. Man sometimes inculcates a vague phenomenon so strongly to himself that it seems real to him; for instance, he may imaginate that he is the president of a country so intensively that he walks and talks like the president. If, however, he were asked at that moment if he were really that president, he would

.realize his imagining, and shamefully admit that he was just imaginating

Lovers also enjoy making mental images of their beloved; sometimes it gets so intense that they feel that their beloved is really there, next to them, talking to them, although the beloved may be miles away. Inculcation also plays an important role in man's psychological activities. Inculcation is significant in causing large-group movements. If we study the psychological lives of many people, we will see that half of it is filled with their ideals, wishes and imaginations. Imagination is quite important for poets, too. Imagination and inculcation form a resistance against external .mechanical factors

They show that the human soul has a kind of non-mechanical activity, and does not always submit to fixed laws of nature; in fact, it can influence and change phenomena, and display his independence against fatalistic nature. Imagination and inculcation actually depict the principle of the supervision and dominance of the self – .the origin of free will

Repentance: Repentance is one of the psychological phenomena everyone feels - ۲ once in a while. When man is inefficient in recognizing what goal is desirable to him, or how to achieve it, or when he does harm while doing it, or loses something, he feels repentant, which makes him unhappy. If he realizes, however, that the loss he suffered was not his fault, he may feel sad, but not repentant. Sadness is different .from repentance

Man feels repentant when he fails to detect the reasons or the results

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of free will-based actions, but not in actions that he has no free will in. As Jalal-addin :Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) says

اینکه گویی این کنم یا آن کنم این دلیل اختیار است ای صنم

یک مثال ای دل پی فرقی بیار تا بدانی جبر را از اختیار

دست کآن لرزان بود از ارتعاش وآنکه دستی را تو لرزانی ز جاش

هر دو جنبش آفریده حق شناس لیک نتوان کرد این با آن قیاس

زآن پشیمانی که لرزانیدیش چون پشیمان نیست مرد مرتعش

مرتعش را کی پشیمان دیده ای؟ بر چنین جبری تو بر چسبیده ای

زاری ما شد دلیل اضطرار خجلت ما شد دلیل اختیار

گر نبودی اختیار، این شرم چیست؟ وین دریغ و خجلت و آزرم چیست؟

You can say 'I'll do this and that' shows that you have free will, my dear one. Just)

make an example, and you'll see the difference between fatalism and free will. Some aged hands quiver themselves, but you can quiver your own hand, too. The Righteous God has created both, but they are not comparable. You may be repentant for making your healthy hand quiver, but the old man never feels repentant for his shaking hands. It is

you who has the free will do it. In emergencies, we are distressed, and our repentance shows our free will. If there is no free will, why is there shame? Why all the repentance, shame and sorrow? In other words, when one wonders which one of two alternatives to choose, this indicates free will, for fatalistic factors never leave us (.at a dilemma; they only provide us with a compulsory choice

In these verses, in fact, Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi uses the feeling of .repentance as a proof for free will

۳ - Feeling responsible is another reason for the existence of free will. Without free will, responsibility will be meaningless. If someone fatalistically does something, there would be no blaming him; if one has a duty to fulfill, however, he deserves to be .reprimanded for failing to do it

If an employee, for instance, does not go to work on time, and something happens due to his absence while he is relaxing at home, the employee is to blame, for he ignored the duty he was responsible for, and between the two factors – work and staying home – he chose the latter. Thus, the employee will be punished for being able to fulfill his responsibility by the supervision and dominance of the self, but he .made no use of that power, and ignored his duty

۴ - Shame: Sometimes man suffers from the feeling if shame. If it is due to actions outside his free will, he will soon escape the shame; even the

wise would not consider that action to deserve feeling ashamed. In the cases where

man has had no part in a shameful act, he comforts himself and escapes having a guilty conscience. Shame is one of man's greatest superiorities over animals. No animal feels shame, but man does; and he could never feel ashamed without free will. Shame is one of the passive phenomena based on awareness and the dominance of .the self

Difference in motives to fulfill duty: People fulfill their duties and obey laws in - ۵ different ways. Some do it only for their personal benefit. Some others consider both their personal benefit and the others'. These people do not always let their self-follow their personal benefit, and sometimes make use of the supervision and dominance of the self. Some people fulfill their duty for the sake of the duty itself, which they consider the goal. They regard the duty as virtually valuable. Of course, the duty does .not impress them so greatly that they have no psychological flexibility left

When man fulfills his duty consciously and regardless of any mechanical factors, it shows he has free will. Some people fulfill their duties as a means to discover necessities and the good; due to their spiritual independence, they do not require any motivation to do their jobs. They constantly feel the will to fulfill their individual and .social responsibilities, and always tend to do good and invite others to do good, too

The latter group are superior to all

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the people mention previously, and their self has such supervision and dominance over their instincts that they need to other factor, even duty. Those who do not need to feel responsibility to rescue others' physical or spiritual lives, and sacrifice .themselves to do so, are among this group

A Look at Human Rights

point

Unless we begin to interpret mankind in a domain of values, speaking of human rights is impossible. Those who claim to be arguing about the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights should first specify which kind of human being they refer to: the one described by the holy prophets, i e. the being created with innate greatness, created by God’s perfect wisdom, the being who lives to be good and become perfect, the being to whom any insult equals insulting God’s will? Or do they mean a wolf-like .creature devoid of any values

Human rights should be based on innate greatness and generosity; none of the Western philosophies, like Nietzsche and the supporters of authoritarianism have provided such a basis. In order to become a universal culture, the Universal Human Rights should concretely prove human dignity and greatness, and eliminate any .Machiavellian, authoritarianism, or utilitarianist ideas

Western human rights are based on mutual coexistence accompanied by peace, freedom, and justice in all societies. Although such a basis is significant, it cannot provide a foundation in which all people can feel themselves as a part of one family; that is only possible by means of a much greater foundation – which, in Islam, is

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.God

Merely making and compiling laws does not necessarily mean executing them. For a legal system to be executed ۱) there should be no bias among people and ۲) the educational background needed for the system to embrace reality should be established. This is why Islam has provided a series of psychological and moral .principles common to all people in order to make its legal system feasible

Human rights in Islam are based upon religion, which results in a few exclusive :characteristics

It is a legal system based on God's will; in other words, it is God who has presented -۱ His subjects with these rights and responsibilities. Thus, each individual not only performs his duties with pure sincerity, but also considers fulfilling them to be of .critical importance to one’s own development and perfection

.Man’s own perfectionist character is responsible for enforcing Islamic laws -۲

The fact that Islam – as other religions – is based on Abraham’s innate religion -۳ .makes it easier to prove that human rights and duties are universal

Why the Human Rights Were Made: the Western Point of View

Seven reasons have been presented for the compilation of the Human Rights. We will :now comment on some of them

In the Human Rights Declaration, “the basis of freedom and peace lies in identifying -۱ the virtues of all of mankind and their equal, untransferrable rights”. The problem with this point is that it cannot be claimed unless man's innate value and dignity is proven. The Declaration considers all human beings, with all their ethnical, racial and cultural ,diversities and characteristics as equal

and invites them all to abandon their disputes and advantages. But how can we make this embrace reality – by force, or showing people the necessity and value of such rights?! In other words, human rights will never truly exist unless people are made to realize that there are rights for human lives alongside the rights providing their .natural mutual coexistence

The Declaration uses the term “members of the family of mankind”, which is of -۲ great significance; more important, however, is making it come true, and why humans have very seldom achieved unity throughout history. The answer is: man has seldom embraced elevated virtues throughout history. Islam, believing that everyone is part of God's family, emphasizes brotherhood and unity, and strongly believes that .all human beings are potential divine light

Human innate dignity” and “members of the family of mankind” are meaningless“ -۳ unless man proves himself to be worthy of kindness. If people's innate respect for humanity is not confirmed, and each human being cannot love himself, he will never be capable of loving others. It must first be proved that man respects every other

human being, and that everyone is able to truly love himself. He should be able to advance from accepting respect for congeniality to loving humanity for the sake of humanity itself. Then, having understood the universality of such human congeniality which is caused by dependence upon God, he can be kind and loving to others .authentically, not due to a desire or mortal feeling

Human -۴

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rights will be impossible unless people control their purely natural life and their selfishness. Man must realize that the intelligent balancing of one's desires and wishes – emphasized by all philosophers and religions – is not a myth or impossible. Compiling such idealistic rights by people who are totally obsessed with managing .their natural life, is like building a glorious mansion on top of a volcano

Freedom of speech, uprooting poverty and fear have been claimed to be the - ۵ reasons and motives for setting the Human Rights, but they are in fact merely the means, not the end. The “means” aspect of freedom is much more logical than its “end” one. Fear and poverty are also factors that prevent human life from continuing, and their destruction will make man's life much easier to go on. They are, therefore, .inhibitors of human life, not factors developing it

In the Declaration, states are obliged to make global respect and true human rights -۶ a reality through cooperation with the United Nations. We might even rightly claim that such a promise is indeed the highest responsibility governments worldwide can :ever undertake. However, two points must be kept in mind

a) preparing the grounds for having human rights accepted globally by means of making human dignity understood and approved of, and

b) the political, personal and cultural issues pertaining to each membering states, disputes and conflicts in which sometimes lead to disagreements between state leaders on what is proper and deserving for mankind. Thus, again we must

reiterate the necessity of mutual understanding and agreement on the basics of human virtues and dignity.

Considering what man has been through, the conclusion we get out of all the causes and motives in the preface to the Declaration of Global Human Rights is:

Man cannot possibly reach a feeling of real mutual understanding unless human beings' souls get closer to each other.

The Reasons and Motives for Setting Human Rights in Islam

The fundamentals upon which the human rights were set in Islam are very different from those in the West, so their motives and reasons will also naturally differ to a great deal. Let us consider some of the reasons and motives for establishing human rights in Islam:

١- In Islam, the life and death of one human being is regarded as equal to the life and death of all of mankind. Thus, Islam elevates mankind way beyond quantities to the domain of qualities. See the Holy Qur'an, ٥:٣٢.

٢- The true value of kindness and charity toward people lies in the charitable deed itself. In other words, man must be kind for God's sake alone, not for the reward he might get from others. See the Holy Qur'an, ٧٦:٩.

٣- The closest of human beings to God is the one who is the most helpful and useful to others. Everyone should run to aid their fellow beings. As a hadith says:

الخلق كلهم عيال الله و احبهم اليه انفعهم لهم

"All people are like God's family; the most loved by God is the one who is the most useful and helpful to people."

٤- Islam

believes all human beings to be members of one big family. Their relationship must be .one of brotherhood and harmony

Islam categorizes human beings into several groups. However, they all still have a -۵ :series of common rights in Islam, which are

,a) the right to live

,b) the right to innate greatness

,c) the right to work

d) the right to education, and

.e) the right to freedom

The divine, supernatural factor is necessary for human development and -۶ .prosperity, and Islam has put much emphasis on it

The Ad Valorem Theorems in the Human Rights Declaration

Let us now study and analyze some of the ad valorem issues included in the :Declaration of Human Rights

Man: Everything in the Declaration of Human Rights is based on mankind. Here we -۱ are concerned with how it interprets man. According to the Declaration, is man the same creature born by unconscious laws of nature, who spends his aimless life destroying the earth, fighting his fellow men, and quenching his endless desires for pleasure, and is eventually buried under the ground? Or is man the meaningful being who, according to righteous religions created by God's will and wisdom, has been ?made to head for a meaningful end

If we accept the first interpretation man would be a totally selfish creature, seeing himself as the end and others as the means; a being who only thinks of seeking his own pleasures, human innate values and greatness have no meaning at all. The Declaration of Human Rights unfortunately does not – even once – say a word about

the necessity of

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piety, or encourage people to seek it; as we know, man can have no superiority, .dignity, greatness or value without piety

Man's Virtual Dignity: The key to freedom, peace and justice is accepting man's -۲ munificence, his greatness, which is not possible without admitting that man has virtual dignity. Unless this goal is established, the destructive formula, "I am the end, the others are the means" will always prevail. Man's virtual munificence and dignity is the most important issue in the human rights, and all intellectuals should keep its .necessity in mind

Members of the Human Family: One of man's greatest ideals is having all human -۳ beings related to each other. Unfortunately, ever since social life arose, human beings have never felt themselves united, except for when God-sent leaders made them recognize their virtual ability to be one. We cannot have people keep their unity and relationship unless they join with the supernatural, where they originate from. If man is to stop seeking his own benefit and think about others' benefit, he must have a .common, divine goal

Brotherhood and Equality: This is undoubtedly one of the greatest ideals in social -۴ human life. All of God's prophets and true men of wisdom have tried to make it a reality. But alas, the tyrants of history have always destroyed it. Brotherhood among .men is the fertilization of the highest possible concept of unity and emotion

Friendly Relationships: One of man's oldest wishes throughout history has been to -۵ have all of mankind live

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in friendship and peace. So far, due to selfishness and alienation from the true human self, the relationships among human beings, in particular between the powerful and .the meek, have been one of wolves and sheep

۶- The Spirit of humanity: is also one of the valuable concepts in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. If the spirit and soul of mankind, with all its glory and holiness, were truly respected by the powerful leaders of the world, history would have definitely taken a different course, and many human beings would not have been oppressed and undergone so much atrocity. The human spirit, however, can be considered as sacred only when it is regarded as a non-physical, non-materialistic issue, not merely a part of the nervous system.

۷- Equal rights: Recognizing human rights and establishing equality among all is one of the highest wishes of developed man. Its reality, alas, throughout history has seldom gone beyond writings and lectures.

۸- Freedom: Freedom has been defined in a variety of ways. Let us define it as the factor providing the survival of a desired life and the supervision and dominance of the human character upon the pros and cons of an action on the path to the good. One of the points of criticism the Declaration of Human Rights undergoes is that it emphasizes natural freedom so much that spiritual freedom has been ignored. Even some of man's collective rights, like avoiding weaknesses, have been neglected.

۹- Peace: Every mental, moral, or religious reason concerning

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the value and importance of human lives has also emphasized safeguarding and protecting them. Since peace and friendship are essential to safeguarding and protecting life, it proves that all war and conflict are to be opposed and overruled. The important point about peace is that physical conflict and killings cannot be avoided without wiping out the motives for war inside human beings.

۱۰- Justice: The conscious, free way that is in accordance with the law is justice. The important point in this definition is, which law is the free, conscious and compatible with justice? How can it be determined? After all, each individual and every society accepts principles that are in accordance with their own specific culture and circumstances.

Thus, the Universal Declaration of Global Rights must determine which reality about justice it conveys. Hence, once again the importance of fine human moral ethics, originating from pure human nature and accepting evolutional principles is proved. Furthermore, if we consider man's freedom as so vast and unlimited that he would feel no shame to commit the filthiest of actions, nothing called justice will exist in him; his deeds, if in accordance with the laws and regulations set for him, would be fatalistic. The justice required if human rights are to be accepted and obeyed cannot .come true without moral ethics

The Highest human wishes: Freedom of belief and eliminating poverty are - ۱۱ considered as the highest of man's wishes in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The necessity of discovering and respecting human

rights is emphasized with the aim of preventing savage actions leading to mutiny, hoping to create a world in which human beings enjoy freedom of belief and have no .dread of poverty

Of course, it is obvious that establishing freedom of belief in human communities and removing any threat of poverty is a necessity; they are not, however, the highest human wishes. They are merely means to prevent the theory of “life for life” – which .suits animal history, not human history – from becoming a reality

Wisdom and Conscience: The two words “wisdom” and “conscience” have been - ۱۲ included in Article ۱ of the Declaration in order to prove human glory and dignity; they are sources of rights, not the rights themselves, and should have been included in the .preface, not in the article itself

There is little argument that man has wisdom and intelligence that helps him think and distinguish right from wrong. The concept of conscience, on the other hand, is under much debate; the first question is, what is conscience? Does it refer to awareness – ?self-consciousness, in particular – or moral conscience

Of course, it means moral conscience, and those who set and compiled the human rights intend to use it to encourage people to follow the thirty articles of the Human Rights. If man is to make correct use of his moral conscience and not let his wisdom fall into obeying his desires and whims and eventually reach the truth, humanities intellectuals should begin discussing such

issues, and prove that our predecessors and contemporary have been quite wrong in .ignoring these originally human issues

Life: In our era, biology and some psychological schools of thought have become -۱۳ so obsessed with science that they have come to regard human life as a physical, materialistic issue. They believe that life is merely a gathering of substances; this so-called "scientific" belief destroyed the value of human life. There can be no value for .man's life unless it goes beyond the physical limits

The Belief and faith of united nations: These two concepts have also been - ۱۴ damaged by the extreme science-obsessed, for they regard belief as nothing more than scientific conformations based purely on scientific premises; emotional .perceptions are of no value to them

Universal respect: The necessity of universal respect has been emphasized in the -۱۵ Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Demanding universal respect for an issue without illustrating why will clearly never go beyond a hearty request; it is essential, therefore, that the philosophy underlying this universal respect be explicitly explained .for the people on earth

Merely claiming it to be important will not make people form the respect. They must really understand its reason, for respect is one of the psychological phenomena that is value-based, and if the UN has not been able to save values from the peril of the professionally science-obsessed, by no means will it succeed in getting respect by just .begging for it

Mutual Understanding: It is clearly stated in the Universal Declaration -۱۶

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of Human Rights that mutual understanding plays a crucial role in the complete execution of its articles. This is perfectly logical, and much needs to be done to make it .come true

Savage Actions: In the preface to the Declaration, neglect and humiliation for the -۱۷ human rights is said to lead to savage actions. The point of significance here is that if intellectuals and leaders of societies do not regard the strong overcoming the weak as a savage act and do not attempt to harness human selfishness, savage deeds will never come under control. The idea "Whatever I want is to my benefit, and I can get anything I consider to my advantage" must be eliminated and replaced by "I can use ".completely what is my right, and my friends and society have to defend my rights

Sin and rebellion: The preface of the Declaration also reads, "Since neglect and - ۱۸ humiliation of human rights leads to savage deeds and sinful, rebellious actions by man." We, however, do not approve of using terms like "sin and rebellion" here, for they convey rebellion and mutiny against values. More suitably, "resistance heading for righteousness-seeking" should have been used, which means the individual's .resistance to acquire his lost rights

Great effort: The preface ends with inviting humans to "make great efforts to - ۱۹ expand these rights by means of education and respect." This is a moral value of high significance, and the grounds should be prepared for humans to commit themselves .to

The Ultimate limit -۲۰

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of development: One of the points of importance in the Declaration is that, "education should be guided in a way so that it elevates the human character to its ultimate level of development." The interpretation of what that development is, alas, is usually

neglected. Intellectuals who study human culture should put much more effort into interpreting what development, perfection and freedom means. From a general point :of view, development and perfection can have two meanings

a) Human development and perfection means the power to achieve every goal possible for man to achieve. In other words, it is the absolute power to gain anything man can possibly accomplish, whether it is a human value or not. Such an .interpretation of development and perfection would definitely prove anti-human

b) Development and perfection means, "man influencing and being influenced by the universe, all of whom and which are dependent upon God Almighty, the granter of perfection and development." This concept of development and perfection calls for internal human refining of speech and actions based on the instructions prophets of .God have brought us

Correct compliance to moral expectations: The Declaration presents correct - ۲۱ compliance to moral expectations in a democratic society, which is not entirely perfect, for it obscures the concept. In a democratic society, where quenching any desire – provided that does not disturb others – is allowed, this can destroy fine .human morals

The Points in Common between the Western and Islamic Views on the Human Rights

There are several things in common between the human rights Islam presents and :the Declaration of Human Rights

Both regard the right -۱

.to live as quite serious

.Both have paid significant attention to human dignity -۲

In both systems, the right to education is considered as one of the responsibilities -۳ .of social leaders

They both consider the right to freedom as one of the primary rights, which should -۴ .be provided by the government and the society

.They both approve of the right to equality -۵

:Let us now consider what they have in common and how they differ

The Right to Live: In both systems, the right to have a deserved life, freedom, - ۱ security, and the elimination of torture, atrocity and inhuman behavior has been :emphasized. Nevertheless, there are some points of difference between them

.a) In contrary to the Western system, Islam believes life to be a blessing from God

b) The Declaration of Human Rights considers governments and states all around the world responsible for executing the laws concerning the right to live, but there is no .guarantee whether they will actually be carried out or not

c) Islamic human rights state that human life cannot be destroyed by any means at all, but the Western human rights does not. In Islam, nobody is allowed to bring harm to his own life, and if others bring harm to him, the issue must be resolved and .compensated

d) The right to live is so significant in Islam that even abortion is not allowed – except .for highly dangerous cases

Human Dignity: This principle has also received attention in both systems. However, -۲ Islam believes there are two forms of

:dignity

.a) The innate, natural dignity and greatness all human beings possess

b) The value-based dignity arising from activating human potentials on the path to .perfection

:The points in common between the two systems regarding human dignity are

.a) All human beings are entitled to dignity

.b) No human being can be humiliated

.c) Man's dignity brings him certain rights and duties in order to carry it out

.d) No political preference or social situation can eliminate man's dignity

.e) Torture, disturbance or insult of any kind is forbidden

.f) No individual's name, dignity or reputation should be insulted

g) Every individual is entitled to the standard of life required to provide him/her and .his/her family with a healthy, dignified living

:The two systems differ on the principle of human dignity

• The Western system of human rights makes no distinction between innate dignity .and value-based dignity, but Islam does

• In Islam, innate dignity is regarded as a God-given blessing, whereas Western human rights have no logical explanation for it, for they have no accurate .anthropological system

• In Islamic human rights, the right for people to live in surroundings free from any corruption or vice is an unquestionable reality, but this does not exist in Western .human rights

٣ - Education: There are several points in common between the two systems :concerning the right to education

.a) The right to education is generally approved by both systems

b) Both systems regard education as important to human development and .emancipation

c) Parents have the first priority in selecting what kind of education suits their children the

.best

.d) Every human being is entitled to dignified education

:The two systems, however, have some differences

a) In the Western system of human rights, primary school education is considered necessary, whereas Islam believes education should continue throughout man's life, for each human being is entitled to a dignified, deserved life, which cannot be possible .in Islam without correct education

b) In Islam, it is the parents' natural, value-based right to choose their children's type of education provided the fact that their selection be calculated and accurate; such a .condition does not exist in the Western system of human rights

c) In Islam, the education of orphans is the responsibility of those who legally have the child's custody, for instance the child's grandfather. The Western human rights .include nothing on this

d) In contrary to Western human rights, much importance is given in Islam to man's .mental and spiritual issues

e) Another point absent in the Western system is Islam's belief that in an Islamic society, all people have the right to invite and encourage others to do good

f) Islam believes that propaganda and the mass media should serve to guide man toward perfection and greatness; in the West, they mainly serve to quench desires .and create pleasures

Responsible Freedom: Again, we see some points in common and some - ۴ :differences. Let us first consider the commonalities

.a) All humans are born free, and cannot by any means be enslaved

.b) All humans are equal in terms of dignity and freedom

.c) All human beings have reason and conscience

d) All humans

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.should treat each other in a brotherly fashion

.e) No human being is allowed to insult one another

.f) Freedom of expression is of the undoubted human rights

g) Another one of the rights humans unquestionably have is the right to be provided .with and make use of scientific, literary and artistic advances

.h) All humans are entitled to freedom of religion

.i) Both systems believe that every human is entitled to the right of citizenship

:However, Islam has several advantages over the Western system of human rights

a) Islam emphasizes that no one has the right to exploit or dominate another; .Western human rights neglect this point

b) The numerous results of man serving as God's slave have been accepted in the .Islamic system of human rights

c) In Islam, no one is allowed to, "…make use of totally unlimited freedom of speech, expression or religion so as to disturb the members of the society." As mentioned before, freedom is not virtually absolute, and it is not the goal; it is, in fact, the state of being provided with the creative force of life that enables man to reach an intelligible ".life

- Freedom of selecting a religion should also be accompanied by the required

.education

- The forbidden aspects of freedom are not confined to the cases where others' rights are violated; man should not harm his own development or progress, either.

۵- The Principle of Equality: Here we do not mean that all human beings completely resemble each other, or that they are all the same; the

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point is equality in a certain number of principles and characteristics. Generally, human beings can have three kinds of equality:

a) "Equality in relation to the source and origin of the highest principles of the universe",

b) "Equality in the identity and characteristics all human beings have in common",

c) "Conventional equality in the natural rights required for life",

Both systems have some points in common concerning equality:

- They both emphasize the equality of all human beings with regard to the law.

- Everyone is guaranteed the right to refer to the judiciary to get back what is his/her right in both systems.

- All human beings – regardless of their race, language, sex or religion – are entitled to be provided with social services.

- The right to establish charity groups and community services has been guaranteed in both systems.

- Everyone has the right to present his/her case to a court of law.

- Everyone is protected by the law against any kind of bias.

- Every human being is entitled to attempt to accomplish the highest goals of life.

:The differences between the two systems regarding the principle of equality are

a) If someone's presence is necessary for a group or community that serves the good of the whole society, he/she is religiously obliged to be there.

b) Although obeying and keeping social order and discipline has been emphasized in both systems, Islamic societies are basically different from democratic ones.

A Brief Study of the Qur'an

point

– The Qur'an can provide us all the truth about man

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whether in the "what there is" domain or in the "what there should be" – if we attempt to understand it with a pure soul and all of our powers. It is necessary that we study as much as possible about each subject beforehand, in addition to then begin to think on the verse in the Qur'an concerning the subject.

Generally, four conditions are to be met if the immense glory of the Qur'an's verses is to be fully comprehended:

- Truly original thoughts and realistic conclusions.
- Avoiding such thoughts mixing with the concepts and perceptions of sedimentary cultures.
- Extensive study on the subject. The significance of this condition lies in the fact that once we have studied others' thoughts and opinions on a subject, our point of view about it changes.
- Studying what the Imams have said about the subject we are studying, for the Imam's knowledge and mysticism is based upon what the Prophet Muhammad knew and the verses revealed upon him – their knowledge of the Qur'an, therefore, is the highest.

However, some the above conditions may in some cases be more important than the others, e.g. studying the ideas and thoughts of scholars when they have given the subject particular homage, like the issue of the factors that make history. We believe that there are two distinct groups of verses in the Qur'an in regard to the truth about the factor that brings about history. The verses of the Qur'an interpret each other, and the reasons for this

:are

The verses of the Qur'an have been sent by God. Whatever issue they might - ۱ concern, not only do they not conflict with the other verses , they even supplement and enrich them, for they depict a part of the truth about God and the universe related to "man as he is" and "man as he should be." If there were any contradiction among the verses of the Qur'an, its unity of meaning would fall apart and the .miraculous effect would be lost

The Qur'an has been studied by critics and experts on speech and philosophy ever -۲ since it was sent by God. If they had found even the least disagreement or contradiction in it, they would have definitely made it public, especially at the time Islam had recently arisen and the idolatrous were doing their best to destroy it, for they were losing all their belief, wealth, history and culture due to Islam. Still, they failed to come up with any contradiction in the Qur'an; if they had, it would have .provided them with an easy victory, and no war would have needed to take place

The unity and systematic structure of the Qur'an in presenting a great deal of facts -۳ concerning theology, natural sciences, man and the universe, decrees and orders, moral ethics and tales, leaves no doubt that its verses must be able to interpret each .other

?What is the Qur'an

We believe that the Qur'an is light, guidance, the cure, a blessing, a letter from the Creator of the universe to

his servants. The Qur’an is a book that can help us become real human beings and rise to divinity. It tells us all the truths about a meaningful man and a meaningful universe. It is a tongue that will never become silent, for man's serious questions on life will never end. This is not a book made up by limited human brains that may only :account for one aspect and fail to consider the others over time. A book that says

و العصر ان الانسان لفی خسر الا الذین امنوا و عملوا الصالحات و تواصوا بالحق و تواصوا بالصبر

By the time! Surely man is in the way of loss, save those who believe, and do“ righteous deeds, and counsel each other unto the truth, and counsel each other to be (steadfast.” (۱۰۳

!and will never fall into decline or silence. Never

Any complete research on the humanities must begin with a study of the existing scientific and philosophical ideas; then, one can proceed to the concerned Qur’anic verse, and see how clearly the Qur’an has clarified the issue. “Profound feeling” and “logical reasoning,” both vessels of recognition and cognition, will be saturated and .satisfied

Unfortunately, some readers of the Qur’an merely open the book and start reading a surah from beginning to end and even proceed to the next one without taking the .concept inside each verse into careful consideration

This kind of reading is unacceptable as a study of the Qur’an. In other words, Qur’an is not something whose words you merely see and

utter. Each verse of the Qur’an is the ultimate sentence that cannot be fully .understood unless you master everything about it previously

The Qur’an is where God's signs can truly be seen; though people could not possibly see God when the holy Prophet was sent to them, God's words in the Qur’an made it

possible for them to intuitively discover God through their innate God-seeking potentials. God's words in the Qur'an interpret so clearly how societies fall and decline that any wise person can see the order and harmony of the universe in them, and feel totally certain that this turning machine must have an operator. This holy book creates two books – one outside man's body, the other inside his existence – that are impeccable. It shows man and the universe "as they are" and "as they should be," and .pictures the universe "as it can be used

The truth the Qur'an reveals on "man as he should be" are the highest, utmost possible. Subsequently, the Qur'an presents the facts about "man as he is" and "the .universe as it is" with absolutely perfect precision

The Qur'an, the most fundamental reference in Islam, provides all the Islamic rules and decrees on moral ethics, ideology, law, individual and social duties that have also .been pointed out in many of the Holy Prophet and the Imams' hadith

:Islam" in the Qur'an means two things"

A general, divine religion, revealed to all prophets to guide mankind, presented to -۱ people by Abraham after Noah. Such a general

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context cannot be ignored or omitted, and it was not limited to a specific society or era, either. In several cases, the Qur'an refers to the Holy Prophet Muhammad as a .follower of this religion

Islam as a specific religion, the context of Abraham's religion plus some decrees -۲ and responsibilities which have not been deviated during time; in other religions, .deviations and changes have taken place

We will now discuss "The Three Religions as Seen in the Qur'an." From the three holy books – the Qur'an, the Bible and the Torah – we can prove that Abraham presented the general context of a divine religion which all followers of the three religions .mentioned are to follow

Since Muslims believe that the Qur’an, which is free from any manipulation or modification, presents that general divine religion, scholars and researchers on all three religions can extract the points they have in common – which forms, in fact, Abraham's religion – and follow them. Also, those Christian and Jewish researchers and scholars who regard Muhammad as an honest human being, have to agree with Islamic scholars on this issue and find the general basics of Abraham's religion from .the Qur’an

Likewise, Mr. Hans Kung, the respectable German scholar, said while attending the seminar on “Prosperity and Happiness as Seen by Muslim and German Thinkers” held :in Tehran

Muhammad was a prophet, and God granted him revelations. Ultimately, however,“ meanings and concepts were revealed to him, so he was free to choose the words to express them

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”.by. The words themselves were not revealed to him

It is apparent that Mr. Kung does admit that the Holy Prophet of Islam was honest and pure, for otherwise he would never have been chosen as a Prophet, and would never have received revelations. Hence, Mr. Kung and those who agree with him can regard the Qur’an as the context of Abraham's religion, and extract a general religion from the Qur’an, for the Qur’an – as we have mentioned previously – introduces Islam as .Abraham's religion

Thus, though it seems that we can extract the general context of Abraham's religion out of the Qur’an – as Mr. Kung agrees – Christians and Jews may object. That is why Mr. Kung posed this question at the seminar, “Well, not that Abraham's religion is the context of the general religion, how and where do we get it and apply it to the three ”?great religions

Thus, the respectable scientist, though believing that the Prophet Muhammad has

!been sent by God, does not intend to acknowledge him as being honest

In response, I answered, "Let us open all three books – the Qur'an, the Bible and the Torah – and accept anything that common sense and pure conscience can regard as ".religion pertaining to God as Abraham's religion

Everyone agreed excitedly, especially Mr. Kung. I hope efforts on the issue soon start, .and scholars of the three religions reach the desired results – even if on the long run

Mr. Kung's views on revelation called for fundamental reconsideration

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are approvable. At the seminar Mr. Kung had said, "The Prophet received revelations, but what he received was in the form of meanings and concepts; it was the Prophet who chose how to word them." Mr. Kung also discussed the differences between .surahs revealed in Mecca and Medina, which we will deal with later on in this chapter

Some of those attending the seminar agreed with Mr. Kung. I replied, "If you mean this theory is a great development in which a Christian scholar presents based on concrete reasons, that is correct. But if you mean that the theory is entirely correct, that is not so; how could just meanings and concepts have been revealed to the Prophet rather than the exact wording? If the Holy Prophet has done the wording perfectly, such a theory would not lead to any specific results, for there would be no room for displacing any words with the same meaning. In the following verse, for :example

و من احسن دينا ممن اسلم وجهه لله و هو محسن و اتبع مله ابراهيم حنيفا

And who is there that has a fairer religion than he who submits his will to God being a" (good-doer, and who follows the creed of Abraham, a man of true faith?" (۴:۱۲۵

There is a concept in which the Prophet has been told to obey Abraham's religion, which has also been presented to the Jews and the Christians, but the Holy Prophet of Islam worded it generally! No one would ever suppose that the Holy

.Prophet would word it like that

If we say that anywhere we do not like the meaning of the Qur’an, we can state that God provided the Holy Prophet with the correct concept but he wrongly worded it, such a statement would definitely be wrong, both by reason and the Qur’an itself. God is so wise that He flows revelations in a way that nothing is changed, not even by .mistake

Having briefly discussed reasoning, we must say that if the Prophet was free to choose which words to use in the verses, it would be possible to have conflicts between the meaning the verse is supposed to have and what the wording suggests, and we would feel no certainty to believe that the Prophet's words are truly God's, :too. Furthermore, the Qur’an's miraculous nature is based on two things

meanings and concepts -۱

wording -۲

We do not regard the Holy Prophet's words as miraculous, even though they are perfectly eloquent. But the fact that the words in the Qur’an are miraculous arises .from their coming from God

Then I brought up the issue of Jesus being God's son, an issue Christians staunchly believe in. “This does not mean 'son' as we normally refer to,” Mr. Kung replied, ”.“rather, it shows how close and valuable Jesus Christ was to God

I replied, “Such an interpretation may be appropriate for the concept you are presenting, but why doesn't this theory regard other prophets, like Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Muhammad as children of God? They were

:also very close to God. Islam even in one case sees all of mankind as God's family

الخلق کلهم عیال الله و احبهم الیه انفعهم لهم

All people are God's family; the people closest to God are those who present God's“ (family with the most benefit and advantage.” (The Holy Prophet Muhammad

On the issue of what kind of book the Holy Qur’an is, let us first take the following :verse into consideration

و السماء بنیناها بأید و انا لموسعون

(And heaven – We built it with might, and We extend it wide.”(۵۱:۴۷“

Interpreters of the Qur’an in the past have provided three different meanings for :“extend” in the above verse

.Vastness, the literal meaning; God has created a very vast heavens -۱

.God has created the heavens with his immense divine power -۲

Daily bread; God has created a huge universe and has reinforced and strengthened -۳ .it by means of proper nurturing

In ۱۹۲۰, Alexander Friedman, a Russian mathematician, presented his theory on the expansion of the galaxies. As George Gamov says in his book, Matter, the Earth and :the Sky

He found that the light coming toward us from galaxies very far away shows a shift in“ spectrum lines toward the red extreme, and the more farther the galaxy, the stronger the shift. Since shift toward red light is due to retreat speeds of light sources – there is no other reason for that at present – [our universe is steadily expanding] and the speeds at which two galaxies move farther away from

.each other is proportionate to the distance between them

The efforts made by Friedman, Hubble and his colleague Milton Homason led to the

foundation of the theory of the expanding universe, which was later supported by the “ .Belgian astronomer, George Lemaitre

We may conclude that any knowledge of the contents of the Qur’an is a step toward .guidance, a step toward less ignorance and blindness

Provided that man be aware of all the potentials hidden in him and that he tries to use them, and provided that he accept the need for evolutionary change with his sensitive conscience and sound common sense, any conscious human being can elevate his sight and development with these words of God's, and cure himself of ignorance. Now we know why so many people not only fail to use the Qur’an correctly, but even cause .harm by doing it

The scientific aspect of the Qur’an is also quite amazing. The Qur’an is, in fact, “ultra-scientific,” for the truths the Qur’an includes are far superior to what we see in .everyday life

There are several important reasons why the Qur’an does not present the truths about the four relationships (Man-Man, Man-God, Man-The Universe and Man-Other Human Beings) systematically and scientifically. Throughout history, scientific issues have continually been subject to change. What was a scientific law yesterday is discarded due to new discoveries today. Let us consider, as a few examples, these :excerpts from Pierre Roseau's The History of Science

- Sciences become fashionable
- Sciences overuse Descartes' method
-

Newton's followers go against Descartes' followers

- Roseau and Kant swim against the current

- A whiplash on analysis
- Auguste Comte creates certainty philosophy, but later on, its weaknesses were revealed
- Arithmetic is basically destroyed
- Analysis crumbles
- Science announces bankruptcy
- Evolution faces many problems
- All scientific breakthroughs and achievements are questioned today

If we were to account for all scientific developments – both in general and in detail – we would definitely have to write a few volumes; the Qur'an, however, provides the concrete, definite truth about the four relationships without the least conflict or change-prone quality, regardless of the currently popular scientific order and harmony.

Though the verses in the Qur'an are not, for the two reasons mentioned above, based on the usual scientific or philosophical methods, they have been referred to and quoted by great scholars and philosophers throughout history. Mollasadra, the great Iranian philosopher, for instance, quotes verses of the Qur'an to give his final reasons why objects have substance movement.

The Qur'an is the greatest piece of advice God has provided man with, for the Qur'an is like a rope man can cling to and rise up to the highest levels of greatness and perfection.

We generally see the Qur'an as a book that gives life; it includes orders that make man start living, and tells him what can inhibit his intelligible life. As we read at the beginning of the second surah in the Qur'an, The Cow, it is "a guidance for the

(Godfearing." (۲:۲

In other words, this divine book can guide the human character and help it flourish, provided that man himself realizes what he is and knows that he should guide it toward his true destiny on the pathway to eternity, and safeguard it from impurities .as best as he can

The Qur'an: A Miracle

You may have read the Qur'an many times, but if you consider carefully the kind of atmosphere and land the Holy Prophet was chosen to preach people in, you will indeed admit how miraculous the Qur'an is, even by glancing at one of the smaller .surahs

Another miraculous aspect of the Qur'an which, unfortunately, has been neglected, is .the verses that show the mathematical nature of the universe

Having the mathematical nature of the universe explained by a man with no education of any kind, in a country so overwhelmed with dark ignorance that even .calculated thought was non-existent, must be a miracle

:Two conditions have to be met before we can understand this miracle

Enough information must be gained on the conditions of the Arab peninsula and -۱ .also the life of the Holy Prophet before he was appointed as prophet by God

.Fairness, conscientiousness and avoiding clichés while studying history -۲

A few examples of the verses in the Qur'an that show us the mathematical face of the :universe are

و ان من شی الا عندنا خزائنه و ما ننزله الا بقدر معلوم

Naught is there, but its treasuries are with Us, and We sent it not down but in a" (known measure." (۱۵:۲۱

لقد احصاهم و

عدهم عدا

(God] has indeed counted them, and He has numbered them exactly."(۱۹:۹۴]"

Verse ۵۳ of the surah Distinguished is one of the most comprehensive verses proving the "sign" aspect of the universe and that fact that from that very aspect one can find ":"God

سنریهم ایاتنا فی الافاق و فی انفسهم حتی یتبین لهم انه الحق اولم یکف بربک انه علی کل شی شهید

We shall show them Our signs in the horizons and in themselves, till it is clear to them" that it is the truth. Suffices it not as to thy Lord, that He is witness over (everything?"(۴۱:۵۳

The above verse states that having considered and correctly understood God's signs in both internal and external worlds, man can realize that God is indeed the truth and just. We should never confine ourselves to just sit there under the huge tree of nature and be satisfied with merely watching, for we are "human beings," and we have a duty. Such a feeling arises out of careful attention toward the universe, not superficial, childish toying with it. Furthermore, if we study our own existence :curiously and consciously, we will indeed conclude that

Though we may possibly restrain from being impressed by neither good actions nor" bad, we always feel there is something like an organ inside us, an organ always ready to start playing, pouring music into our soul, crying out against aimlessness, rebelling ".against oblivion

If we were to also complement the above statements with a scientific, philosophical touch, we would say, "The sound

of this internal organ, loud and clear, rebels against oblivion, and states, 'O man! You cannot say that you do not exist, and such a confession will lead you to a second one –

now that you cannot claim that you do not exist, you cannot be aimless or farce either, :so you must have a duty.'“ As the renowned Iranian poet, Hafiz, says

در اندرون من خسته دل ندانم چیست؟ که من خموشم و او در فغان و در غوغاست

I don't know what there is in my weary heart, but although I say nothing, it is crying) (.out with all its might

This is not just a poetic context; as we realize by studying the outstanding figures of science, philosophy and mysticism, such sentences arise out of elevated feelings rather than crude ones. These great men could never have achieved such supreme .feelings without abandoning their previous raw, crude ones

A brief study of the Arab culture and knowledge at that time proves that the verses in the Qur’an that show the mathematical aspect of the universe cannot possibly be conceived in the mind of a normal human being, however a genius he may be. Did Arabs in those days use arithmetic or mathematics even in their daily life? Could they even step beyond their “stomach and below the stomach only” style of life and look at the sky, let alone think about the mathematical sky? Can there be any miracle better than having a man in those dark times gain

such immense knowledge of the universe that he can speak of the mathematical .context of the universe? That is how miraculous the Qur’an is

There are many proofs for the mathematical aspect of nature. Here, we intend to focus on just one important one: the universe is lawful, so the fact that we do not know so many things in the vast universe is not because the universe is baseless and :non-organized. As Einstein says

The universe and discovering the universe are two very different things; what we“ may see as disharmonious and without law and order is due to our own viewpoint and ”.attitude

God also emphasizes the necessity of careful observation and thought on nature, which shows that nature can be discovered by means of meticulous calculation and thought. However, the other issue is that, being mathematical, the universe is not closed and unoccupiable for God, either. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) ,says

عالم چو آب جوست، بسته نماید، ولیک میرود و میرسد نو نو، این از کجاست؟

The universe is like the water in a stream; it looks like a closed system, but new, fresh) (?water keeps coming, how can it be

If we carefully study the history of culture and knowledge in the Arab world of that era, how the people felt about mankind and the universe, their viewpoints on their history and their future, their values and morals, it would be quite stubborn or ignorant to have doubt in the fact that

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the Qur'an is a miracle or to claim that Arab people themselves wrote the Qur'an. The immense beauty of these exquisite sentences that intrigue the deepest of human feelings, and the incredibly strong logic alongside the power of the speaker creates a .miracle of both style and expression

How God's Divine Beauty Can Be Recognized

We can start from spiritual and mental ideals and use them as the starting point to reach divine beauty. The first one is glory, greatness and immense beauty, which the Qur'an refers to as malakoot; such a feeling cannot be put into words, as the absolute dominance of order and harmony in the universe reaches our brain via a kind of .physical wave that cannot be worded

".This is a "feeling," not an "imagination;" it is "received," not "reflected

ز تو با تو راز گویم به زبان بی زبانی به تو از تو راه جویم به نشان بی نشانی

چه شوی ز دیده پنهان که چو روز مینماید رخ همچو آفتابت ز نقاب آسمانی

تو چه معنی لطیفی که مجرّد از دلیلی تو چه آیت شریفی که منزّه از بیانی

ز تو دیده چون بدوزم، که تویی چراغ دیده ز تو کی کنار گیرم، که تو درمیان جانی

How could you disappear from our eyes? Your shining face shines through the mask) of the heavens. You are so delicate that you are free

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above any reasoning; you are such an elegant sign that you are too superior to be described. How can I stop looking at you? You are the light of my eyes. How can I ever (.move away from you? You are right here in my soul

Khajou ye Kermani

If we get such a feeling when we watch the delicate movement of a leaf on a branch in a breeze, and our soul rises to the skies, like the feeling we get when we realize the mathematical movement of the universe on a mountain top in the moonlight; would we not get a far higher feeling flowing in us like waves if we actually realize in ?ourselves the creator of all this beauty

هو الله الخالق الباری المصور له الاسماء الحسنی

He is God, the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper. To Him belong the Names Most" (Beautiful." (۵۹:۲۴

When you are anxious to meet the painter of the most beautiful painting possible, is it equal to the quivering anxiety you feel when you saw the painting? Never. Anxiety to meet the painter is far greater than that of seeing the painting itself, for through meeting the painter, you can see the beauty of the painting in his mind, in his mental levels; such a vision cannot be tarnished by sunlight, rain, insects, a madman or .children

Your quivering climax and intuition is not over once realizing the mental beauty in the painter's mind; you go on to see that the immense artistic activity

that has led to such a beautiful painting is totally incomparable to the other various .potentials and talents existent in the artist

Now add the highest of moral virtues, capacities, justice and sacrifice for righteousness to such an artist's character, and you will see that the beautiful painting will seem like nothing more than a few meager brainwaves of the artist! You will then be fascinated by the artist himself and his mental beauty rather than his beautiful painting. No natural scenery has succeeded in making human beings so fascinated that they will be ready to include it as even a superficial part of their soul; true love, on the other hand, engulfs all of man's mental and spiritual horizons, becoming such a .powerful desire that man wants to make his beloved a part of him

:As Kant says

I can't get enough of watching two things: a sky full of stars – a statue of infinity –" ".and the human conscience, the wonders of which truly cannot be described

:Victor Hugo also adds

There is a great gallery in the world – the sea. Greater galleries also exist – the sky." ".But greater than both to watch is the human conscience

In the two quotations mentioned above, a philosopher and an anthropologist have referred to two galleries; indeed, they have discovered great secrets about man. Surely, they do no mean merely seeing something; their point is a kind of profound vision together with thought, in which the thought affects the

.vision, like water affects leaves, though not conspicuously

Therefore, the way mentally developed men watch the skies neither like the way some "froglike" men watch the reflection of the stars in the water they swim in, for the latter only plan to throw the reflections out of their pond, nor like observers merely

aiming to discover astronomical laws and call themselves astronomers. Thus, even greater than the gallery these two thinkers refer to is observing the skies and the immensely exquisite order and harmony we see in it; yet, it still resembles a beautiful .painting

ينقلب اليک البصر خاسئا و هو حسير

(Your eyes will return to you, wearied, feeling the need to come back to you." (۶۷:۴"

Another verse that intrigues man to realize and appreciate the glory and beauty of :the universe is

اولم ينظروا فی ملکوت السماوات و الارض

(Have they not considered the dominion of the heaven and of the earth?" (۷:۱۸۵"

Here, using a negative question, God scolds people for not observing the skies and the earth. Do they not possess senses, reason and thought? Why do they not look ?down to the earth they live on

I am amazed how some great thinkers fail to realize the immense glory of the universe! It seems that if a conscious, aware thinker looks up and observes some great human beings' moral values and their mental and spiritual greatness – for such human beings cannot possibly have an immense spiritual state and the highest of moral values without having realized and appreciated the

glory and beauty of the universe – their eyes will also open up to the great beauty they have within themselves too; even the mere walking of people on earth is a sign .of the glory and the beauty of the universe

Beauty –whether in nature or in man's mind– is approved by Islam, for it believes that .all forms of beauty pertain to God

Many verses in the Qur'an attribute beauties to God, and even condemn people's

:depriving others of these beauties. For example

قل من حرّم زینه الله التی اخرج لعباده

Say, 'Who has forbidden the ornament of God which He has brought forth [from“ (nature] for His servants?”(۷:۳۲

:We will now classify beauties as seen as desirable in the Qur’an

۱ - The Beauty of the Sky and its Stars: Several verses in the Qur’an refer to the beautiful sky and its stars; God directly attributes such a beautiful structure to .Himself, its Creator

۲- The Beauty of Man's Creation and His Face: This form of beauty has been referred :to in various ways in the Qur’an

لقد خلقنا الانسان فی احسن تقویم

(We indeed created Man in the fairest stature.”(۹۵:۴“

و صوّرکم فاحسن صورکم

(And He shaped you, and shaped you well.” (۴۰:۶۴, ۶۴:۳“

In the former verse, “the greatest stature” refers to all aspects of beauty, whether in appearance or anatomy; in fact, it depicts the incredible order and harmony all .researchers have witnessed in the human body

۳ - The Beauty of Living Creatures: God also refers to the beauty in the creation of :other living beings

و

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لکم فیها جمال حین تریحون و حین تسرحون

And there is beauty in them for you, when you bring them home to rest [in the“

(evening] and when you drive them forth abroad to pasture [in the morning]." (۱۶:۶

The Beauty of the Scenery on Earth: Many verses in the Qur'an concern the - ۴ beautiful scenery on earth God has asked man to watch, like flowers, trees, plains and other plants. These extreme forms of beauty have been provided for man by God so that man can relieve himself from the monotony of life, and refresh his soul. Thus, God is attributing beauty to Himself in these verses, and it is proved that it has been .God's will to create them; man has not induced them into his own mind

The Beauty of Mental and Intellectual Ideals: The verses in the Qur'an emphasize -۵ :the beauty of moral ethics and moral values and all proper human virtues

و ان الساعه لاتیه فاصفح الصفح الجمیل

(Surely the Hour is coming; so pardon thou, with a gracious pardoning." (۱۵:۸۵"

فاصبر صبرا جمیلا

(So be thou patient with a sweet patience." (۷۰:۵"

Now let us discuss the contents of the Qur'an. We may categorize the contents of the :Qur'an into the following eight groups

The allowed (halal) and the prohibited (haram): Halal refers to legal freedom - ۱ regarding an issue or an action, like the freedom to marry someone, eat certain things or wear certain clothes that are allowed. The opposite, haram, refers to issues or actions one is prohibited from, like

.producing harmful material

Mandatory duties (fara'ez) and the meritables (faza'el): Fara'ez are the mandatory -۲ actions one must do, such as daily prayers, fasting, the Haj pilgrimage, defending one's life, etc.Faza'el are approved, merited actions not as necessary as the former, .like having good intentions, following moral ethics, etc

The Omitted and the Substitutes: Though various definitions have been given for -۳ the nasikh (the substitute) and the mansookh (the omitted), it is generally agreed that the former happens when the decree cited in a verse of the Qur'an is omitted, though the verse itself remains in the Qur'an. However, some scholars have denied the existence of such verses in the Qur'an. These four verses have been pointed out as :instances of nasikh and mansookh in the Qur'an

ما ننسخ من آیه او ننسها نات بخیر منها او مثلها

And for whatever verse we abrogate or cast into oblivion, We bring a better or the" (like of it." (۲:۱۰۶

و اذا بدلنا آیه مکان آیه و الله اعلم بما ینزل

And when We exchange a verse in the place of another verse – and God knows very" (well what He is sending down." (۱۶:۱۰۱

یمحوا الله ما یشاء و یثبت و عنده ام الکتاب

God blots out, and He establishes whatsoever He will; and with Him is the Essence of" (the Book."(۱۳:۳۹

فبظلم من الذین هادوا حرّمنا علیهم طیبات احلّت لهم

And for the evildoing of those Jewry, We have forbidden them certain good things" (that were permitted to them..."(۴:۱۶۰

Thus, it is possible to have such a

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phenomenon in the Qur'an; many stories about the life of the Holy Prophet of Islam and the Imams, cited by both Shiites and Sunnites, also refer to some cases of nasikh .and mansookh

Emergency allowances and the main mandatory duties: In some cases, allowances -۴

.have been made for emergencies or situations made by force

فمن اضطر غیر باغ و لا عاد فلا اثم علیه

Yet whoso is constrained to eat dead flesh or other forbidden things, not desiring nor“ (transgressing. No sin shall be on him.”(۲:۱۷۳

The General and the Specific: Some laws and decrees cover all people and all jobs, -۵ for example trade is allowed, unless details are added. Some other laws and decrees .focus on specific people or things

Tales, Anecdotes and Examples with Useful Points: The Qur’an includes many - ۶ stories of past peoples and nations that God has provided to add to man's knowledge of how to live properly and learn the lessons from them, like the stories of the .Pharaoh, the Ad people, and many prophets and great figures

The Unlimited and the Limited: Some issues are not confined; others qualitatively -۷ .and quantitatively limited, like personal issues

The Firmly Clear and the Like: Some verses are so clear that we can firmly know -۸ :what they mean

الحمد لله رب العالمین

(Praise belongs to God, the Lord of all Being.”(۱:۱“

:In some others, the meaning is not so clear in the words used

و جاء ربک و الملک صفا صفا

And [on Judgment Day] thy Lord comes, and the angels rank“

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(on rank...” (۸۹:۲۲

It is definite that “God comes” cannot refer physical movement. There are two

:important points about such verses

:Sometimes the meaning of the verse is the opposite of what it seems to be -۱

و جاء ربک والملک صفا صفا

(And thy Lord comes, and the angels rank on rank..." (۸۹:۲۲"

Sometimes there is an unclear word in the verse that calls for explanation and - ۲ :interpretation, like "time" or "hour" which sometimes means Judgment Day, or

ما کذب الفواد ما رای

(The Messenger's heart did not deny what he saw..."(۵۳:۱۱"

.and other words at the beginning of the surahs

Both of the above-mentioned forms exist in surahs revealed in Mecca and also in those revealed in Medina, so they should be interpreted with care. This does not mean, however, that people cannot use the Qur'an; the more knowledge they have, the better they can use it, as is the case with some man-made books, like poems by Hafiz or Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi), which despite being literary works, .mean different things to different people

Another issue about the Qur'an is the surahs revealed in Mecca (the Makki ones) and those revealed in Medina (the Madani ones). Differences have been pointed out in :these verses, which we will now analyze

It has been said that the surahs revealed in Mecca have fewer verses than the - ۱ ones revealed in Medina. This is not so, for in both types, there are long surahs, medium ones and short ones. The short ones do, however, exist more frequently among the surahs

.revealed in Mecca

Makki surahs include about ۷۷ verses concerning laws and decrees, some containing more than one law or decree. If there are about ۵۰۰ verses in the Qur'an including laws and decrees, about one sixth or one seventh of them must have been revealed in Mecca. Of course, most verses showing laws and decrees have been revealed in Medina; most short surahs have also been Makki. Thus, it is inaccurate to say that all short surahs have been Makki and all surahs concerning Islamic laws and decrees have been revealed in Medina. It is natural, however, that most laws and decrees be sent once the fundamentals of Islam were well-established, and that happened in .Medina

It has been said that Madani surahs contain laws and decrees, but Makki ones do -۲ not. This is also incorrect. Here is just a short list of the many verses revealed in :Mecca that do include laws and decrees

.Hood, ۱۱۳ and ۱۱۴

.Abraham, ۳۱

.Jinn, ۱۸

.The Believers, ۲ through ۹

It has been said that Makki surahs are more threatening and scolding, whereas the -۳ Madani ones are milder. This is again incorrect; Joseph, revealed in Mecca, contains – in the story of the prophet Joseph's life – many gentle, delicate issues concerning the most beautiful points on mankind. Such verses seem to have been revealed in a beautiful place with fascinating scenery; it has, in fact, they were revealed in Mecca, where the Holy Prophet of Islam was continually in conflict with people, and had to

.scold and threaten them

It has also been said that the Makki ones have shorter verses than the Madani -۴ ones. First, we must say that many surahs revealed in Mecca have a lot of short

verses. All of the verses of surahs like The Clear Sign, The Earthquake, and Charity are short, and so are the last four verses of surahs like Help, Daybreak and Men. Muhammad, a surah revealed in Medina, has many short verses; all of the verses in the surah Man are short.

Secondly, many Makki surahs have very long verses, like The Spoils, The Battlements, Jonas, Hood, Joseph, The Camel, The Cave, The tairways, Mary, Ta Ha, The Prophets, The Spider, Al-Hijr. We see that almost one third of the verses of all Makki surahs are long, and many also have medium-long verses like Abraham, The Spider, Lokman, The Greeks, etc.

۵- It has been said that Makki verses are vague and unclear, whereas Madani verses are elaborate and understandable. Whoever said this either knew nothing about the Qur'an or wanted to be cruelly stubborn. If he was referring to the verses that may have several meanings, he could have said it in a more suitable way, too.

The Divinity of the Qur'an

point

There has been no book written by man about the truth about man and the universe that does not suffer from numerous limitations and shortcomings. There are several issues, on the other hand, that prove the Qur'an is a divine book:

۱. The Sense of Absolute Dominance and Control

Found in no other man-made book, this is one of

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the Qur'an's most incredible qualities. Consider these verses:

و قضی ربک الا تعبدوا الا اياه

"Thy Lord has decreed you shall not serve any but Him..." (۱۹:۲۳)

The context addresses the whole universe; it controls and dominates all of mankind.

یا ایها الانسان انک کادح الی ربک کدحا فملاقیه

O Man! Thou art laboring unto thy Lord laboriously, and thou shalt encounter Him.”(“ (۸۴:۶

The contents and unusual wording included in the above verse determines with total dominance and control the nature of man, his final goal and the path he should go through. Such a statement could not possible have been said by a human being, a part .of mankind drowning in nature, ideals and desires

Such a sentence would have been impossible without absolute dominance over man's .ideas, ideals, thoughts, and corruptions

فاین تذهبون

(Then where are you going?” (۸۱:۲۶

The question “Where are you going” is posed from a position that has absolute dominance and control over where man has come from, where he goes from here and why he has come here. The law that dominates man's good and bad desires is a background prepared for the laws of the universe to flow – the place where God's will .is displayed

The Void of Contradiction in Qur’anic Verses .۲

The fact that conflict and contradiction does not at all exist between the verses of the Qur’an can be of quite help in order to know the Qur’an better. Though the verses of the Qur’an have been revealed to the Holy Prophet during hectic moments of his life – which were full of ups and downs

such as the beginning of his mission, the end of his mission, periods when Muslims where in painful dire straits, when Islam had conquered the whole Arab land, times of triumph and defeat, joy and sorrow – there is no sign of contradiction or conflict .between the verses

:Let us now discuss some other characteristics of the Qur’an

a) Incredible influence and penetration into all of man's mental aspects: The words and expressions used in the Qur’an are at such an immensely exquisite level of .eloquence and beauty that they lead to a mental fascination that no poetry can reach

b) The profound depth in meaning and concept: The Qur’an provides all of the ultimate truths about man and the universe in the form of extremely simply-worded .verses

c) Continuous eternity of content: As Imam Ali says in the Nahj-ul-balaghah, “There is no end to the wonders and unique meanings in the Qur’an; without turning to the ”.Qur’an for help, the darkness can never be eliminated

The continuity of the contents of the Qur’an – a reason itself why the Qur’an is in fact a miracle – shows that the Qur’an is in fact far superior to the developments and changes that occur in human societies. The Qur’an puts much emphasis upon thought .and reasoning

Contrary to what some so-called “thinkers” – totally unaware of the fundamentals of Islam, however – baselessly claim, the necessity of making use of one's senses has been regarded as extremely important in the Qur’an. As we see in the verses

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:below

و الله اخرجکم من بطون امهاتکم لا تعلمون شیئا و جعل لکم السمع و الابصار و الافئده لعلکم تشکرون

And it is God who brought you forth from your mothers' wombs, and He appointed“ (for you hearing, and sight, and hearts, that haply so you will be thankful.” (۱۶:۷۸

و هو الذی انشأ لکم السمع و الابصار و الافئده قلیلا ما تشکرون

It is He who produced for you hearing, and eyes, and hearts; but little thanks you“ (show.”(۲۳:۷۸

قل هل يستوى الاعمى و البصير ام هل تستوى الظلمات و النور

Say: 'Are the blind and the seeing man equal, or are the shadows and the light“ (equal?”(۱۳:۱۶

There are about ۲۴ verses in the Qur’an condemning people who deprive themselves .of using the powers of sensing and observing they have

In general, a great many verses in the Qur’an concern intriguing man to think intelligently and activate their intellectual reason. We may say that no human philosophy or ideology has given so much consideration to intelligent, intellectual .cognition

Many verses of the Qur’an emphasize the necessity of mental activities and :reasoning

Strengthening reason and following it: ۴۰ verses -۱

Precise comprehension: ۱۵ verses -۲

Thought: ۱۷ verses -۳

Careful decision-making: ۴ verses -۴

The importance of being with the wise: ۱۵ verses -۵

Gaining common sense, awareness and knowledge: ۲۱ verses -۶

Gaining knowledge, following it and avoiding ignorance: ۱۰۰ verses -۷

The necessity of learning philosophy, which is one of the reasons why prophets -۸ have been sent

Observing the universe to understand it: ۲۰ verses -۹

Following religion and obeying correct -۱۰

facts: ۱۸ verses

Internal perception and intuition: ۳۵ verses -۱۱

Now that we see so many cases in which man has been commanded and encouraged to make contact with facts by means of his various tools of observation and understanding, no room for doubt is left that Islamic laws and decrees in any way .oppose reason, intelligence and conscience

Thought and Reasoning in the Qur'an

This has been pointed out in many verses; the word tafakkor (reflection) comes in ۱۸ :verses

قل هل يستوى الاعمى و البصير افلا تتفكرون

(Say: 'Are the blind and the seeing man equal? Will you not reflect?' (۶:۵۰"

Thus, Islamic references greatly emphasize that man should know the rules of objective intellect and reasoning – the basics that manage man's intelligible life – and depict them and how man is to use them. By studying the verses above, we see how intellect and reason should be reinforced and what is necessary to make man move .on the path of an intelligible life

We will now present a definition and classifications for reasoning and proof, which involves presenting facts and justifying them for human beings via comparison, exemplification, induction or referring to personal perceptions. There are seven kinds :of reasoning

Mathematical -۱

Inductive -۲

Comparison -۳

Exemplification -۴

Philosophical -۵

Personal perceptions -۶

Intuitive -۷

We should say about the first kind of reasoning that the Holy Prophet has been ordered in the Qur’an to use three fundamental methods for guiding people toward meaningful facts and truths: philosophy, positive preaching and discussion via the best of methods. The Nahj-ul-balaghah also shows this clearly. The Qur’an includes three

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:forms of reasoning

a) Experimental

b) Mystic

c) Experimental-mystic

The third kind involves recognizing the supreme order and harmony of the universe with scenic clarity in a way that it shows its hidden meaning. The Qur’an refers to this form of reasoning – which uses both the innately external and innately internal poles .(– as heavenly observation (reasoning

In this reasoning, the internal pole includes the mind's abstract activity in the immensely orderly, harmonious universe – which is continually changing, because the .creatures in the universe, too, are in continuous move and change

The external pole, on the other hand, involves understanding the visible, observable aspect of the beings via reflection; in this case, the mind is like a mirror reflecting inside itself what it sees in the world outside. Such a situation of understanding and reflection is purely a tool; it seems that man receives the understanding of the universe directly via his own presence there. In other words, he sees a face in a

mirror, and the fades into the face so much that it seems as if there was no mirror at .all

How the Qur'an Sees the Universe: Carefully Calculated

The logic in the Qur'an states in a variety of ways that there is nothing uncalculated in the world; everything is based upon logical calculation. Ultimately, we human beings, merely a tiny part of the universe, can only realize and gain knowledge about some of the events in nature; all great thinkers know too well, however, that the immense .machine of nature is far greater than the small part we see

They

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also know by geometry and final calculations concerned that the universe is much .vaster and more profound than what we may imagine

By studying the verses of the Qur'an we realize that even the smallest event – whether in nature, inside man, individual or social – is quite calculated and orderly. Thus, we can state that the formation and demise of communities and societies, like other natural and human phenomena, are based upon order and logic; nothing happens by chance or coincidence. Some other verses explain how this law also .applies to societies

In some other verses, the prohibition of "corrupting the earth" has been mentioned in a variety of ways: one verse, "…those who corrupt the earth…" (۵:۳۳), regards them as "those who fight God and His Prophet." Another verse involves God damning .("corruptors" and confirmation of their eventual doom (۱۳:۲۵

".Many verses in the Qur'an directly or indirectly mention this form of "fixating reforms

و اصلح و لا تتبع سبیل المفسدین

(and put things right, and do not follow the way of the workers of corruption."(۷:۱۴۲ …"

فاتقوا الله و اصلحوا ذات بينكم

(so fear you God, and set things right between you…" (۸:۱ …"

The Stories in the Qur'an

The Qur'an is definitely not a history book that serves just to report events. God has included these stories to show man's various aspects and dimensions and make people realize fixed, stable laws such as actions and reactions, the cause and effect .and orderly calculations in life

Thus, people can use these stories to gain experience and insight to

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establish their intelligible life. In the Qur'an, some stories have been repeated, like the stories of prophets like Noah and Moses and their conflicts with tyrants. The philosophy behind this repetition is the same as that of the Qur'an's emphasized education and justification of the facts and truths of life, so that people may .understand that human life is no joke, and involves orderly calculation

If people observe carefully what goes on in the world, what happened to other people and why some fall and deteriorate, their ability to realize and reason facts will improve – this is, in fact, "experimental reason," which leads to new knowledge and .increases man's insight

There are many verses in the Qur'an that are quite useful for learning experiences and lessons which build up to an intelligible life, especially these verses: The House of Imran ۳:۱۳۷, Women ۴:۲۶, The Spoils ۶:۱۱, The Battlements ۷:۷۴, Joseph ۱۲:۱۰۹, The Bee ۱۶:۳۶, Haj ۲۲:۴۶, The Ant ۲۷:۶۹, The Greeks ۳۰:۹ and ۴۲, The Angels ۳۵:۴۴, The Believers .۴۰:۲۱ and ۸۲, Muhammad ۴۷:۱۰

There are also other verses about the lives of people in the past, with useful advice on what experience should be learned from them. If one is aware of how valuable life is in this world, what goes on in the universe will undoubtedly be a line of a great book to

him. Thus, every event – past or present, large or small, sad or joyous, about friends or enemies – can be a lesson and provide us

.with experience and advice

The Qur’an includes knowledge of what is to come in the future and what has occurred in the past. Some future events, such as the rise and fall of the Roman .Empire, have been stated

:The events mentioned in the Qur’an can be divided into two groups

۱- Although some verses do not seem to include certain events, scholars have been .able to extract them

۲- The Qur’an contains some basic principles that can be regarded as divine ways and methods. These principles can apply both to the history of man and also to the future. Ultimately, comparing them with past and future events – and experience – requires .internal enlightening, a taste of divinity

The Qur’an states that human life has a goal which is extremely supreme and :important. The verses in the Qur’an show this in a variety of ways

۱- Some verses strongly emphasize that man has not been created aimlessly:

افحسبتم انما خلقناکم عبثا و انکم الینا لا ترجعون

“What, did you think that We created you only for sport, and that you would not be (returned to Us?” (۲۳:۱۱۵

الذی خلق الموت و الحیاه لیبلوکم ایکم احسن عملا

“The God who created life and death, that He might try you which of you is the best in (actions…”(۶۷:۲

۲- Many verses greatly emphasize that everything in the universe has been created

".“justly and righteously

Many verses in the Qur’an call the creatures in the universe “signs.” We can :categorize these verses as

a) Some verses directly call the facts in the universe factors leading

.to faith, monotheism, piety, avoiding blasphemy, belief in the afterlife and fear of God

b) Some verses order us to observe carefully the signs in the universe and emphasize that thought and reasoning are necessary. As some of these verses say, “Those who observe and realize these signs and the order and harmony are those who have sound common senses and strong intelligence.” Many verses in the Qur’an emphasize .this

c) Some other verses clearly justify the righteous creation of the universe. The word haq has several meanings, but when referring to the creation of the earth and the .heavens, it depicts the properness and righteousness of their creation

The point is that God-given laws preached by the Prophet of Islam account for both the adjustment of man's social life and spreading positive moral and mystic qualities; it is an Islamic principle that all domains like law, economy, moral ethics and culture be in harmony and united – man-made laws, however, have not gone beyond providing .man's social life, for they are the result of man's information and desires alone

Every action arising from original mysticism and knowledge and purity, together with its positive results which show in mystical changes, serve as a brighter light shining .the way to the higher level

All the verses in the Qur’an which regard the Qur’an and religion as the factor providing light with illumination definitely mean that the light is the result of obeying ,them, for the abstract words uttered by the Holy Prophet and other religious leaders

and the written aspect of the Qur’an are but physical phenomena. The shining light :arising from them, therefore, can be considered from two aspects

.Arising from God -۱

.Obeying them is what creates light in man's mind and soul -۲

:The Qur’an categorizes life in this world into two groups

a) Worldly life: A purely natural, physical life which includes nothing but desires and .pleasures

b) Life based on reason (intelligible life): Such pessimistic nihilists are lower than even the starting point of the path toward positive mystic development and becoming a perfect human being, for they have not yet gained the awareness that may prove to .them that the universe and their existence is serious and objective

Such a starting point is not a fixed part of man's life that man passes and moves on; the start of awareness and awakening should always be with man and light up his path during his whole life. The awareness and awakening should increase both .qualitatively and quantitatively as he ages

The Qur’an and sunnat is also a very considerable issue. The Qur’an and the itrat (the Holy Prophet's family) are always connected; in fact, their association (as the bigger weight and the smaller weight) forms one of the most important hadith both Shiites :and Sunnites believe in

انی تارک فیکم الثقلین کتاب الله و عترتی ما ان تمسکتم بهما لن تضلوا ابدا

I leave you two great things: the Book of God and my progeny. Follow them, and you“ ”.will never fall astray from the right path

Here, the word saqal

has been interpreted differently, based on how “the book of God and progeny” is interpreted. The most suitable meaning of the word seems to be “weight,” for the .book of God and the Prophet's progeny are what Islam and Muslims depend upon

What we mean by sunnat is the way of the Holy Prophet of Islam, which was presenting the good and evil about man in two dimensions – physical and mental. As we know, sunnat is Islam's second most important reference, and obeying it is every Muslim's duty. There are three forms of sunnat: the words, the actions and the writings of an infallible holy person. Since the knowledge our Imams had was based upon the Qur’an and the Holy Prophet of Islam, sunnat generally means what the .Imams said, did and wrote

On the other hand, sunnat interprets the Qur’an; it is impossible to make full use of the Qur’an without it. Those who believe that the Qur’an already includes all the beliefs, laws and duties man needs to know are either too stubborn or too ignorant, for as we know, the Qur’an does not include all beliefs, laws, duties and basics, and the minds of the public are naturally unable to find or realize them, too. Omit sunnat from Islamic references and all that remains is a series of basic, general beliefs, duties, decrees and moral ethics plus interesting stories in the Qur’an and some .general mental issues that cannot explain or interpret all Islamic laws or duties alone

It

is itrat, the Prophet's progeny, who can interpret sunnat and the Qur’an, and indeed, if the Qur’an and the itrat were not enough, the hadith mentioned above would be useless. Furthermore, if the Qur’an alone were enough and everyone were able to use it in all circumstances, the history of the Shiites and the Sunnites would not be so full of jurisprudential research. Even those who do not refer to the above hadith, admit the necessity of obeying the Holy Prophet's way of life, and have in fact done .so

All experts on Islamic studies agree that Imam Ali was a statue of the Qur’an; he had

complete knowledge of the Qur’an and absolute faith in its content, which showed in his words. Indeed, he must have believed that he was close to God according to these :verses

و نحن اقرب اليه من حبل الوريد

(and We are nearer to him [man] than his jugular.” (۵۰:۱۶ ...“

و هو معكم اينما كنتم

(and He is with you, wherever you are.” (۵۷:۴ ...“

and had found out about it through intuition. He has also mentioned his direct contact .with God in several parts of the Nahj-ul-balaghah

Sunnat has been mentioned many times meaning 'way, law or principle' in the Qur’an and the Nahj-ul-balaghah, which shows how important it is to learn from the ways of life man has had throughout history; otherwise, not only would our study of the history of man and the laws of history prove incomplete, but also we must say that our knowledge of

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.man's identity, his stable qualities – good or bad – would be helplessly inconsiderable

However, contrary to what some ignorant people claim about Islam's lack of attention to the history of mankind, the Qur’an includes many stories that show how man has been in the domains of “man as he is” and “man as he should be,” and provided special emphasis upon traditions that have been followed or should have been followed, .which shows how wrong such unaware or stubborn people are

Traditions and ways of life sometimes arise in the form of the law of causality and the :law of actions and reactions

قل للذين كفروا ان ينتهوا يغفر لهم ما قد سلف و ان يعودوا فقد مضت سنه الاولين

Say to the unbelievers, if they give over He will forgive them what is past; but if they" return, the wont of the ancient is already gone!" (۸:۳۸)

Actions and reactions dominate all aspects of man's life, whether individual or social; there is a sign of the law of causality in every corner of both mankind and the universe. In the philosophy of history as Islam sees it, there must be a law of action and reaction based on a fixed order and harmony in the domain of man's life, for without accepting such a basic principle, historical analysis would be impossible.

The Rise and Fall of Cultures and Civilizations

First, let us see what civilization is: Civilization means creating order and harmony in human relations in a society so that destructive conflicts are replaced with competition toward perfection and greatness; people's social

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lives and communities cause the people's constructive potentials to be activated.

Here, "man-oriented" does not mean the ridiculous concept of "considering man as high as a god;" what we mean is that all efforts and values concerning civilization should be at man's service rather than man being sacrificed for deceiving phenomena called civilization.

The most fundamental fact is that civilization and culture, with all their unique advantages, have been regarded in Islam as servants of man's intelligible life; man's intelligible life should not be at the service of a civilization or culture so as to activate his positive human potentials and supreme feelings.

If man sometimes sacrifices himself in order to safeguard culture or civilization, it should serve to eradicate dangers to intelligible life, not a culture or civilization that does not care about his intelligible life.

A human society affected by the factors that can destroy a civilization or culture is like a human being who has risen due too certain factors, but then suddenly falls.

It is understood from the Qur’an and the Nahj-ul-Balaghah that man is the start and .the end of all cultures and civilizations

و لو ان اهل القری امنوا و اتقوا لفتحنا علیکم برکات من السماء و الارض و لکن کذبوا فاخذناهم بما کانوا یکسبون

Had the peoples of the cities believed and been god-fearing, We would have opened“ upon them blessings from heaven and earth; but they cried lies and so We seized (them for what they earned.” (۷:۹۶

The Qur’an has cited factors like lack of gratitude toward

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God for His blessings (what brought about the fall of the Saba people) corruption, selfishness, tyranny, atrocity, and deviation from righteousness as what makes a civilization or culture fade away, so the opposites of these factors must be those which create and elevate them. Thus, giving thanks for God's blessings, good intentions, justice, acting on the path of the truth, and righteousness are factors that enrich cultures and civilizations. Many verses in the Qur’an amazingly state that .cruelty and atrocity bring cultures and civilizations to their doom

و لقد اهلکنا القرون من قبلکم لما ظلموا

(We destroyed the generations before you when they did evil.”(۱۰:۱۳“

و تلک القری اهلکناهم لما ظلموا و جعلنا لمهلکهم موعدا

And those cities, We destroyed them when they did evil, and appointed for their“ (destruction a tryst.”(۱۸:۵۹

The issue of providing a good living for people in order to create a great Islamic society is a highly important and delicate one, for reaching man's mental and spiritual comfort requires man's physical needs – which, depending on man's various needs .can make quite a vast range – to be fulfilled

Basic Islamic references – the Qur’an and hadith – have dealt with it with great

:emphasis. Let us consider an example

يا ايها الذين امنوا استجيبوا لله و للرسول اذا دعاكم لما يحييكم

O believers, respond to God and the Messenger when He calls you unto that which" (will give you life…"(٨:٢۴

There is no doubt that "giving life" in the above verses does not refer to "being alive and breathing," for

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animals can also explore, discover and struggle without even needing prophets; it refers to finding intelligible life. And intelligible life is indeed impossible without the readiness for a clean life, free from all the evil, greedy opportunism seen in all .lifestyles like industry, agriculture and so forth

Fear of God as Seen in the Qur'an

The Qur'an warns those who have no fear of God that they will meet a terrible punishment, and those who fear God have been promised physical and mental .rewards

Fearing God does not mean that God is a terrifying being able to cruelly hurt His :subjects. We must first see what "fear of God" means. As the Qur'an puts it

انما يخشى الله من عباده العلماء

(Even so only those of His servants fear God who have knowledge…" (٣۵:٢٨"

Here, fearing God refers to the fact that if man ignores God – the greatest truth of all – he will definitely feel depressively incompetent and impotent, and once he does realize how badly he needs God, he will feel terrified for not having submitted himself .to God, for having fought against it

There is no doubt that man needs to gain, consciously and voluntarily, the three common principles (a) belief in the one God, b) regarding God as only One and

truthfully worshipping Him, and c) freedom for all people from slavery) so that he can elevate his own soul and, having reached an objective, targeted state regarding these principles, see himself as united with other similar human beings. The Qur’an includes :some verses regarding such supreme unity

و اعتصموا

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بحبل الله جمیعا و لا تفرقوا و اذکروا نعمه الله علیکم اذ کنتم اعداء فالف بین قلوبکم فاصبحتم بنعمته اخوانا و کنتم علی شفا حفره من النار فانقذکم منها کذلک یبین الله لکم آیاته لعلکم تهتدون

And hold you fast to God's bond, together, and do not scatter; remember God's“ blessing upon you when you were enemies, and He brought your hearts together, so that by His blessing you became brothers. You were upon the brink of pit of Fire, and He delivered you from it; even so God makes clear to you His signs; so haply you will (be guided.”(۳:۱۰۳

There are several aspects that cast light on the immense divine unity the above verse .presents

من اجل ذلک کتبنا علی بنی اسرائیل انه من قتل نفسا بغیر نفس او فساد فی الارض فکانما قتل الناس جمیعا و من احیاها فکانما احیا الناس جمیعا

Therefore We prescribed for the Children of Isreal that whoso slays a soul not to“ retaliate for a slain soul, nor for corruption done in the land, shall be as if he had slain mankind altogether; and whoso gives life to a soul, shall be as if he had given life to (mankind altogether.” (۵:۳۲

That the context of this verse is a very simple formula – “One equals all and all equals :one” – that actually contains the greatest of truths

این ما و من نتیجه بیگانگی بود صد دل به یکدیگر چو شود آشنا یکیست

All this 'me and us' was the result of alienation; if a hundred hearts)

(.unite, they will see that they are in fact only one

Sa'eb Tabrizi

The reason for such unity and equality does not lie in man's physical aspect, but in his mental and physical being, which despite being related to natural levels on one hand, is on the other hand heading for the supernatural, the source of perfection, divine beauty and glory. The part of man that faces the supernatural receives God's light from its original source, then speads it across the world in rays of various magnitudes. Hence, unity, harmony, brotherhood and equality – and above all relationships, the :connection of unity – pertains to the divine sun. As Imam Ja'far Sadiq says

المؤمن اخو المؤمن كالجسد الواحد ان اشتكى شيئا منه وجد الم ذلك فى سائر جسده و ارواحهما من روح واحده و ان روح المؤمن لاشد اتصالا بروح الله من اتصال شعاع الشمس بها

Faithful believers are brothers, as close as the parts of one body. If one part moans" in pain, the other parts will also feel the pain; the souls of the faithful believers are ".one, and such a soul is closer to God than sunrays are to the sun

Clearly, as soon as the faithful man's soul begins its conscious, voluntary competition against others in doing good, his soul will also start getting closer to reaching God. Such a feeling of unity is, as we have previously emphasized, due to faith in what common sense and pure

.conscience decree internally and what the prophets of God tell us externally

The background needed for such a unity to be reached among human beings is the common principles and perceptions from the two abundant domains – man and the :universe. As I stated during the talks I had with some great scholars from the East

We human beings have enough common principles and perceptions about man and" the universe – both in the domain of what there is and in the domain of what there

should be to be able to abandon our destructive conflicts and turn instead to positive, ".competitive forms of perfection

I brought up the same issue again when I met German scientists at the Society of .Philosophy in ۱۹۸۴

We have all agreed that Abraham is the father of the three great religions," I told" them, "and that everything pertaining to him is correct, and our criterion for distinguishing right from wrong is our wisdom and reason. By agreeing on Abraham's nation, we will see that all the means and ways for unity among the believers of these ".three great religions are in our control, for they are all proper, approved qualities

One issue which is common between religions is Judgment Day, and many of the verses in the Qur'an concern it. The Qur'an considers Judgment Day as "The Day of ".Gathering

:On several occasions, the Qur'an refers to gathering

ذلک یوم مجموع له الناس

(a day on which all mankind will be gathered (to be judged)..." (۱۱:۱۰۳ ..."

قل ان الاولین و الاخرین

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لمجموعون الی میقات یوم معلوم

Say: 'The ancients, and the later folk shall be gathered to the appointed time of a" (known day."(۵۶:۴۹-۵۰

Forget Judgment Day, and There Will Be No Good or Bad

This is one of the most serious viewpoints regarding moral ethics and religion .nowadays

Today, instead of making use of their powers to provide their people – and people of

other nations who burn in the flames of poverty and ignorance – with material and spiritual prosperity, powerful countries are busy killing each other and human beings who work hard to extract their daily needs from nature and make contact with their God. This is what naturally happens when Judgment Day is denied and/or forgotten.

Even more amazing is the fact that the selfish Machiavellians pretend to be staunch supporters of goodwill, human virtues, obeying conscience and the necessity of avoiding the immoral and downgrading consciences, but in fact, having deceived the simple-minded, prepare the scene to sacrifice the truth to enhance their selfish goals! Let them make mankind cry as much as they want; the day will also come when they will cry, too.

The Universe on Judgment Day

Science today does provide some predictions on the future changes in the universe, though it cannot present any definite details. Many verses of the Qur'an point out the coming changes in the universe:

اذا وقعت الواقعه ليس لوقعتها كاذبه خافضه رافعه اذا رجت الارض رجا و بست الجبال بسا فكانت هباء منبثا

"When the terror descends (and none denies its descending), abasing, exalting, when the earth shall be rocked and the mountains crumbled and become a dust scattered,

and you shall be three bands..." (۵۶:۱-۶)

There is debate whether Judgment Day is the day when some go up and some go down. Ibn Abbas believes that, "Some people rise on Judgment Day; others are sent down." Hassan and Jabbaee have written that, "Judgment Day sends some people down into the fire, and takes some others up to heaven."

Tabarsi believes that, "Both theories can be summarized as: Those who get inflated in this world become tiny on Judgment Day, and vice versa."

According to the verses in the Qur'an, these events will happen just before Judgment

:Day and on Judgment Day itself

.a) Intense earthquakes; several verses have stated this point

.Mountains will become hollow like cotton wool, and then crumble down

.The sky will split apart, and become unsteady and twisted

.The moonlight and the sunshine will disappear

.The stars will fade out and scatter

.The skies will open up, making doorways through which angels can pass

Two great shrieks will be heard; hearing the first will terrify all people, and the second .will bring them to normal again

Immense horror and distress will engulf people so intensively that they will abandon their dearest, their children, their family; pregnant women will bear their babies and .people will be intoxicated, even drunk, with bewilderment

.The earth will throw out everything inside it, like dead bodies, etc

Waters of the oceans and seas boil and catch fire, and all waters will mix with each .other

Such immense changes and developments do not occur simultaneously; as we have mentioned before, some may take place

.before others

The Qur'an describes Judgment Day as an extremely severe one. Is that because of the galactic developments concerned? Or is it due to the pressure exerted on man's physical faculties and aspects as he prepares to see and express the truth about himself? Indeed, both intelligence and reason and also some evidence arising from

quotations prove that people enter Judgment Day differently, for they have .accumulated various amounts of savings during their prosperous or atrocious life

.Now we will discuss some other interesting aspects of the Qur’an

The Necessity of Knowing the Qur’an

We must know the Qur’an as best as we can and use its light to cure our mental and spiritual problems. Thus, we can create everlasting freshness and vigor in our hearts .by means of this knowledge

Learning about and knowing the Qur’an involves man's learning about and knowing his own perfection-loving soul in the domain of “what there is” and “what there should be.” The Qur’an is not a scientific book that presents man from a limited point of view, or from a viewpoint that is itself subject to change. Such forms of knowledge are either a product of man's natural senses plus the relative meddling he makes when gaining knowledge, or the product of man's specifically aimed combination of his own .coordinates with the fact he is studying

The Qur’an and Creation

God has emphasized in ۱۰ verses of the Qur’an that there is a reason for creating the universe and nature; this is a great warning to man, who should know that he lives in a world

based on truth and reason. Thus, his existence, superior to all the universe in dignity :and greatness, cannot in any way be farce and aimless. As we read

و ما خلقنا السماء و الارض و ما بینهما لاعبین

We created not the heaven and the earth and whatsoever in between them is for“ (playing.”(۲۱:۱۶

In verse ۳۸ of The Smoke, the Qur’an states the same thing, though it refers to “the

heavens” instead of “the heaven.” Moreover, other verses in the Qur’an also state that man's existence in the universe has an aim. Some even reveal the highest aim :and goal of life

و ما خلقت الجن و الانس الا ليعبدون

)I have not created jinn and mankind except to serve Me.” (, ۵۱:۵۶“

Clearly, worship means nothing but being placed in the domain of God's divine attraction field. Furthermore, God has no need for our worship – a fact too obvious .and simple to ask for any reasoning

All these verses order man, in a variety of ways, to understand where they stand in this objective world, and having reached such an understanding, obey their reason, internal conscience and the prophets sent by God – his “external” reason and conscience, in fact. All the laws and decrees concerning this human aspect are .regarded as fixed and basic

The Qur’an and the Consequences of Obeying It

When man moves on the path to evolution, obeying the Qur’an lights his eyes up, for truly accepting and obeying the book of God creates such a light inside man that it even shines through his eyes. Thus, he

will see the truth as it really is; no vagueness or dark points will remain. The eyes and :the ears of faithful human beings are accustomed with interpreting divine words

گوش و دل مؤمن است سامع صوت خدای گرچه به ظاهر همی ملک پر از های و هوست

The eyes and the ears of the faithful listen to the voice of God, despite all the noise) (.the world seems to be filled with

Foad Kermani, Iranian poet

The Book of Justice and Fairness

The Qur’an clearly states that Abraham's religion, which the Holy Prophet Muhammad regards himself as a follower of, opposes atrocity, oppression, ignorance, tyranny and mental stagnation; the Qur’an leaves no question that prophets have been sent by God in order to enforce justice and equality between people. This is by no means in accordance with some attitudes and behaviors seen in some – both Islamic and non-Islamic, including Christian – religious leaders throughout history.

The Book of No Contradictions

Some writers, in an attempt to prove that religion is not an ideology, have said, “The founder of Islam has not presented religion as an ideology, and religious books – even holy religious books (including the Qur’an) – have no compiled, systematic form.”

Their reasoning is clearly false.

The Qur’an, the Book that Confirms and Verifies Prophets

Many verses in the Qur’an verify and confirm the Prophet of Islam and his faith in the previous Prophets of God and their original Books. The Qur’an also states that Islam arises from Abraham's religion:

قولوا امنا بالله و ما انزل الینا و ما انزل الی ابراهیم

“Say you: 'We

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believe in God, and in that which has been sent down on Abraham...' ”(۲:۱۳۶)

The Qur’an, the Panacea for Mankind's Pains

The Qur’an has the remedy for all the mental and/or spiritual suffering mankind has today. So far, man has produced over ۵ billion books, and hundreds of millions of them must concern the humanities. Let us suppose ten million of those books are about the humanities, and let us also suppose one million of that number concerns theological issues, moral ethics and the aches and pains man's soul has today (what there is and

.(what there should be

If we suppose that each of these books have ٣٠٠ pages, we may conclude that ٣٠٠ million pages have been written on man's pains and their cures. Let us put aside ٢٩٩,٠٠٠,٠٠٠ pages of them, supposing they contain examples, anecdotes and supplementary material. Thus, we have ١ million pages directly talking about man's suffering, diagnosing and curing them. Moreover, there are the holy books, which tell .us the truth about man's suffering the most clearly of all

Yet, what pain remains that prevents man from curing himself now that he has so ?many diagnoses and prescriptions

If only there was a book that could tell us how to find that single pain that prevents all the others from being diagnosed and cured, people say. We respond that the answer has undoubtedly been included in the holy books and the pure-minded scholars and thinkers' interpretations of them. Namely, the pain is unmoderated selfishness which is constantly strengthened by ignorance. Such

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a pain has only one cure: will power. Unless will power is awakened and activated .inside man, it is impossible to cure the pain

The Qur'an, The Book for Mankind

Though the Qur'an does not recognize an individual broken off from the society, – and that lies in the delicate fact that such a person is not useful – we can say that nature and the characteristics the Qur'an presents in description of man reveal both territories. If we pay close attention to the "natural" and "mental" aspects of man given in the Qur'an, and if we gain enough knowledge about what the Qur'an regards as "proper and suitable" for man, we can state that the relationship between man and .the Qur'an is: The Qur'an is the book for man, and man needs the Qur'an

Without a doubt, no human mind or book has been able to describe man as the Qur'an has – and this is perfectly natural, for even the most realistic thinkers have been able

to consider mankind from one or at most two aspects; such a limited scope would definitely not lead to the real picture arising from the combination of all aspects. Furthermore, there is great difference between a rigid solid effort do discover itself and a living being that dominates it trying to do so; likewise, there is a great difference .between an animal's knowledge of itself and man's knowledge of the animal

Thus, there is great difference between man's presenting himself to himself, and his .creator providing the identification

All scholars

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and experts of the humanities admit that so far, anthropology has produced nothing more than a bunch of scattered, superficial material. There is no need for us to elaborate on this; let us, instead, consider the mind-boggling question that has been posed in most human societies and saddened the compassionate thinkers and intellectual leaders around the world: Instead of telling us something about the "philosophy of life," why are you just stuffing poetry in our minds, deceptive views in !?our eyes and balanced music in our ears, all of which lead to even more questions

We may conclude from the situation human societies are in today that not much has been revealed about human beings and humanity – apart from the limited faces made to create mutual coexistence and dealing with inconveniences. Let us study "mankind" again, this time from the Qur'an's point of view; perhaps we can escape .half of the damage, which will be quite a gain in itself

Positive Mysticism

point

The mysticism we present is based on pioneer human culture, the culture that arises from the definite doctrines of the pioneers of human knowledge and mysticism, not what the Sufis or monasteries believed in. Mysticism should see man's perfection .possible through caring for people, and hard work

Such mysticism not only does not neglect social matters, but also considers man’s external endeavors as significant as his internal attempts to achieve perfection. This kind of mysticism is derived from God's words, quotations from Imam Ali in the Nahj-ul-balaghah and his

midnight prayers in the palm groves of Kufa, and Imam Hossein's prayers in the Arafat desert and his battles on Ashura.

Mysticism is the path that can take man to his highest possible level of character, and let him devour the taste of being related to divinity.

If man follows a mystical way of life, he will achieve two results:

۱- Attaining the highest, most divine of all possible pleasures.

۲- Getting closer to God, which is feasible through purifying the human soul.

Thus, we may state that: Thus, positive mysticism consists of the expansion and divine domination of the “human self” over the universe, in order to let his “self” be absorbed by absolute perfection, which eventually leads to man’s reaching God.

There are a few points about mysticism that must be kept in mind:

۱ - Mysticism is quite vast in range and depth, so it can both involve the life of somebody like Imam Ali and at the same time the pleasure-orientated aspects of everyday life.

۲ - Various kinds of mysticism have one thing in common. Whether Pythagorean, Islamic or Western mysticism, they all emphasize that animal-like desires and needs should be controlled and avoided by the mystic.

۳- Mysticism is applicable to several groups of people:

۱ - Those who have achieved the highest level of human greatness possible.They

possess both high knowledge of the universe, and have also established the greatest level of contact feasible with the Creator of the universe, but still remain socially .active. This kind of mysticism can be called positive mysticism

Those -۲

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who have isolated themselves inside mortal desires because they have failed to achieve knowledge of the universe and establish a relationship with God, and tend to escape the frustrations of the world around them. It can be named negative .mysticism

Those men of great elegance and enjoyment who get delighted with the - ۳ appearance of beautiful spiritual states while relating to the universe, and only ask mysticism to give them these spiritual states. This kind of mysticism can be entitled ."inward" mysticism

The Characteristics of Positive Mysticism

Positive mysticism can also be called intelligible mysticism, for all efforts in positive head towards activating all of man's potentials onto the path to the ultimate end of the universe. In positive mysticism man gains full domination over both internal and external worlds; while establishing an intelligible relationship with the universe and .other humans, he can also achieve a life free of his natural self

Positive mysticism has a starting-point, a path and a destination – the highest goal of life. The starting-point is awareness of the soul and its perfection-seeking tendency on the path to greatness. Such an awakening can make man take the world he lives in .seriously and move on the path to an elevated life

The path is the conscious effort and exploration that takes man from "what there is" ".to transformation into "what there should be

:The characteristics of positive mysticism are

۱- The “self” is not humiliated in positive mysticism. People are never told to destroy their own egos. Those who speak of humiliating and destroying it are

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actually inviting people to self-destruction, not self-enhancement. They do not know that self-humiliation is as lethal to man as being overconfident and conceited is.

۲- In positive mysticism, simultaneous attention is given to both the advantages of man's spiritual evolution and to the moderation of his natural self. The issues positive mysticism undertakes in order to elaborate the greatness and values that can save man from self-obsession:

a) Thinking about the world of nature

Paying attention to the order and discipline dominant over the world.

Observing the fascinating glory of the universe and paying attention to the objectiveness of nature

Identifying spiritual pleasures and realizing that satisfaction and pleasure is not limited to purely natural pleasures

Knowing virtual pleasure and how it flourishes

۳- In positive mysticism, not only are the harmful effects of the natural self emphasized upon, the role of the attractiveness of perfection in the development of man is also considered important. Sufficient attention is simultaneously given to the lethal harms of the natural self and also the necessity of endeavoring to escape it; the positive aspects of man and his potentials and his potentials are also of great importance.

۴- - In positive mysticism, there is no self-overgrandisement nor is there self-humiliation. When man intends to defy selfishness and overconfidence – which are, indeed evil – he unfortunately humiliates his advantages and talents; this can inhibit his way to greatness and perfection.

One cannot only think of saving himself in positive mysticism; he cannot be - ۵ irresponsible towards others, for man can never reach human perfection

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unless he recognizes the needs his fellow men have, and try to adjust their physical :and spiritual life. As the Holy Prophet has said

من امن بی من بات شبعانا و جاره المسلم جائع

He who sleeps on a full stomach when his Muslim neighbor is hungry has no faith in“ ”.me

In positive mysticism, one cannot claim, “It's none of my business how the others are.” The greater man's steps toward positive mysticism are, the”vaster will his divine rays ”.shine on other human beings

Responsibility and duty play a significant role in positive mysticism. Feeling - ۶ responsible out of freedom and consciousness and not in return for a reward or for .fear of punishment is the key to spiritual freedom from animal desires

All events in positive mysticism are reflected in accordance with reality, for - ۷ expressing things in any other way is in fact fighting against one's own self. Alas, some so-called “mystics” have turned to lies, claiming that sometimes lying is more “proper.” They do not realize that the spiritual harm in lying is far greater than its “advantages.” A true mystic is never deviated from the truth in various individual or .social opportunities

One always moves on the path towards the truth and righteousness in positive - ۸ mysticism. The meaning of free movement on this path is much more elegant than and elevated than the common dealings between people every day. Man cannot find the right path amidst all the ups and downs of life unless he can let divine

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.light shine on him

In positive mysticism, the pilgrim moves in accordance with God's orders and the -۹ .ways of the Holy Prophet

A life based on mysticism is established on clear reasons, not whimsical desires or fatalistic factors of life. The pilgrim is always enlightened by divine light, and he sees .everything as expressing the glory of God, for he is at all times obeying God's orders

The true mystic is always on his way; he never believes that he has arrived at his -۱۰ .destination

من غلام آن که او در هر رباط خویش را واصل نداند بر سماط

I'm at the service of that who never thinks he has reached the peak. I am willing to) serve and follow that person who never even thinks about the possibility that he may (.have achieved the highest of mystic levels

(Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi

Many men have the capability and quality to lead others, but their selfishness prevents their followers from progress. As Maxim Gorky says, 'A good teacher needs .to have been a good student before

He never claims, "I have reached God; my search is over." In positive mysticism, .stopping and paying attention to oneself only is a barrier on the path to divinity

The pilgrim does not try to deceive himself in positive mysticism. And one who -۱۱ does not deceive himself cannot be deceived by others, either. He must take extreme ,care not to fall for worldly pleasures, for man is full of dreams

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baseless speculations and hallucinations that draw him towards them. If he can continue his way without being contaminated by hallucinations and desires for pleasure, nothing can trick him and prevent him from reaching God. The deceiving self, which is in fact no other than the "natural self," can inhibit man's capability to ".manage his strengths and talents, and prevent him from moving on to the "real self

۱۲- The true mystic is far above public acceptance or defiance, for his character is completely independent. In other words, neither can a large number of supporters add to his glory nor can people's turning away from him cause him any fear or worry.

۱۳- In positive mysticism, the world is not neglected. Mystics do not consider the world as worthless, and do not insult it. He sees the world as the best possible place for exploring facts and honesty. It is the place to lead a healthy and intelligible life. A mystic believes that development and change in the world follows certain order and man should also move along this path. One example of that orderly fashion is that if man does not have a developed character and freedom employed on the path to goodness and perfection, he will never be able to see the real face of the world.

۱۴- If a mystic is given a position of great power and leadership, his spirits and leadership will remain the same as when he is praying to his God. The mystic, as leader of people,

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does not expect them to thank him – he is free from such petty desires. He sees himself as equal to others, one who needs to move along the path to perfection; thus, he does not expect people to act as his slaves. He considers himself as the factor promoting the others' dynamic development, not an inhibitor. He does not believe that he should be pretentious toward people. He is not superior to them.

The Characteristics of Negative Mysticism

۱- Those who support negative mysticism believe that in order to build a divine, spiritual self, the “self” must be crushed and the natural instincts have to be disabled. Indian beliefs, such as Buddhism, insist on this a great deal. Instead of harmonizing the different aspects of man's existence, they tend to eliminate some of his potentials and powers.

۲- In negative mysticism, the mystic escapes the torturing problems of both his personal and social life. Sometimes the frustrations and inconveniences we suffer when we fail to achieve our goals make us develop a negative point of view toward

.natural life, and thus flee into our own self to escape them

Considering the ultimate secret of the human spirit, we realize that if inconveniences and failures make the human soul suffer, natural joys and pleasures should also be in conflict with it, for the secret of the soul is hidden; the mystic, hence, should be .sensitive toward both the difficulties and the pleasures

Negative mysticism shows our incompetence toward man and nature. Some of - ۳ these so-called "mystics," although totally

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ignorant of what exists in the human world or in nature, still tend to drown themselves in their mystical states. Such pleasing psychological states based on ignorance convey a false mysticism, not a true one. True mysticism moves on a path through the light of knowledge, not dark ignorance. Negative mysticism entirely neglects thought and .wisdom, whereas positive mysticism considers them as highly significant

The world outside is completely ignored in negative mysticism, and the mystic sees -۴ only his "internal dark room." It seems the observable world is of no value to them. Contrarily, the key to the world inside and mystical domains is taking the world outside into consideration. The truth is that if man deviates from gaining knowledge about his outside world – which has provided the means for his natural existence, and influences him and is influenced by his soul and mind up to his last breath – and does not realize the crucial need of this knowledge, it is like trying to play a beautiful piece .of music without a single musical instrument

It is impossible to enter the domain of receiving and understanding the mystics of the universe without accepting the universe that has dispatched the mystic to this ,spiritual world. As the renowned Iranian scholar and poet, Sheikh Bahaee says

ز حدوث پا کشیدم، به قدم رهم ندادند ز وجود هم گذشتم، به عدم رهم ندادند

به کنشت سجده بردم، به صنم رهم ندادند

به طواف کعبه رفتم، به حرم رهم ندادند

که تو در برون چه کردی که درون خانه آیی؟

I passed the mortal, and I was deprived of the immortal. I overlooked existence and) the universe, and was rejected from entering non-existence. I circled God's house, but they did not let me in. Why? 'What have you accomplished outside this great world (?that should make you eligible to enter

Sometimes the reason for being attracted to negative mysticism lies in escaping - ۵ from awareness and freedom, for deep awareness brings about attention toward ideology, which in turn creates a feeling of responsibility and duty. Since dutifulness requires avoiding petty desires, worldly pleasures and creating awareness, escaping awareness traps some inside themselves and keeps them happy in their so-called .mystical world

The Ecstatic

The supporters of this kind of mysticism are greatly eager about sheer joy, ecstasy and psychological excitement and enthusiasm. Many mystics begin their mystic journey excited by reaching these ecstatic states, but later on pursue a new path and .a new goal

If the joy of these ecstatic states is caused by perfection-seeking and the human self flourishes by the illuminating rays of divine light on it, a correct move toward development has been made. This is where man feels ashamed about his initial pleasure-seeking endeavors. Although the joy and ecstasy produced by mystic excitement is immensely enjoyable, man is in fact too great to amuse himself with such short-living states. Man can make real contact with God, activate his internal potentials and

.elevate himself

The pleasure-based nature of these ecstatic mystic states inhibit the divine light from shining onto man, because pleasure is one of the levels of selfishness, pertaining to the natural self. The phenomenon called pleasure – whether natural, physical pleasures, or the spiritual pleasure mystics enjoy – is quite different from the prosperity and joy of the soul. Any form of pleasure-seeking contradicts with the holy sorrow that those advanced toward God receive. Such a sorrow does not arise from material or financial shortcomings, but out of the possibility of not reaching the peak .of perfection

True mystic pilgrims are not only not worried or sad about themselves, but their anxiety is that they may deviate from the path to perfection. In brief, joy and sorrow cannot be regarded the mystic's goals; he cannot be neglectful toward the highest of human potentials. It is all right, of course, if the mystic feels the properness of psychological joy at the beginning of his journey, and use it as the base of reaching divinity. We must keep in mind that joy and prosperity differ from pleasure seeking. Joy is a highly significant spiritual state, and very difficult to describe, especially since .it cannot be made understood to those drowning in their selfishness

Man cannot achieve this joy unless he frees himself of his spiritual chains. The special spiritual state produced by being released from the jail-like chains of the spirit is, although quite pleasing at first, followed by the spirit moving alongside the

universe. Briefly, this kind of joy can be regarded as release from the soul and reaching the truly original world of nature. As we said, pleasure-seeking originates from self-worshipping, which strongly opposes to spiritual prosperity. Pleasure-seeking and self-worshipping make human potentials intertwined and confused, whereas in the state of human spiritual joy, human potentials actually begin to .flourish

The deadly contradiction between self-worshipping and the prosperity and joy of the

human soul can be considered as based on this principle: selfishness and showing off intertwines all human potentials in the self, sending man back to the domain of fatalistic, natural ignorance he had tried so hard to escape; spiritual joy and prosperity, on the other hand, involves the activation and development of human potentials in accordance with the general rhythm of the universe, heading for the .highest possible state of perfection – the Almighty God

The Conditions and Obstacles on the Path of Mystic Endeavor

:There are several obstacles on the mystic's way

A mystic should never feel he has gained any advantage, accomplishment or - ۱ superiority. Such a poisonous feeling can not only inhibit his promotion to higher .levels, but even deteriorate his perfection-seeking nature

Worldly interests and attachments like greed for wealth, fame, power and - ۲ popularity among people are destructive to mystic progress. However, if wealth and power can serve as a means to adjust one's and also others' life, not only will it be constructive, but even a kind of worship, for the mystic must undergo a great deal of .suffering to do so

Saturating the feeling of selfishness in -۳

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any way or by any means greatly hinders mystic advance. So is claiming piety and purity. Some people believe that claiming to be pious and pure is not a fact showing selfishness, but great mystics disagree; every glory or advantage the mystic gains arises from divine favor, so associating them to the mystic's own endeavor is a kind of .blasphemy

The blinding lights and joys the mystic experiences in his spiritual states can also be -۴ inhibiting. Some mystics drown in such pleasing states, thinking they are at the peak of perfection; these states, however, serve merely to encourage and activate the .mystic on his path

۵- Other things that may hinder a mystic's progress are the activation of amazing powers such as knowing what goes on in people's minds, awareness of the unseen, past and future, and the ability to influence others' lives both physically and mentally. The mystic should remember that his goal is reaching God, not God's favors. Reaching God is much more difficult than discovering amazing God-given powers.

۶- Absolute tranquility and freedom and complete knowledge and dominance over the universe are among the amazing effects of human glory, but if the mystic considers them as his own, he might fall astray of his spiritual greatness, and even claim to be God himself!

۷- The feelings of spiritual joy and expansion are signs of entering divine attraction and the appearance of divine qualities in the mystic's heart. He should prevent the above mentioned feelings from inhibiting his way to divine

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perfection.

Mysticism and the Four Relationships

It is important to consider the four relationships of the mystic – with himself, with God, with the universe and with his fellow beings.

۱- The Mystic's Relationship with Himself: The human self is of great significance in mysticism, for it possesses various aspects and potentials, and their activation and development is essential for reaching perfection. The human self is situated in the middle of its two extreme conditions – the purely natural self and the highest possible human self – which are infinity apart. In order to join them together, it is necessary to transform the purely natural self into the highest possible state of the human self, for which cleansing of the natural self and deserving to be attracted by divine perfection is required.

۲- The Mystic's Relationship with God: In Islamic mysticism, the existence of God is accepted as clearly obvious. People have different relationships with God, and the

highest possible form is “finding God,” not “calling for God.” The mystic should feel God's existence with every particle of his being. Internal purification, complete dominance and knowledge of the universe and witnessing its glory are among the factors that influence the process. The mystic achieves joy and spiritual prosperity by .means of making contact with God and feeling His presence

No joy or pleasure can ever be comparable to that. The greater the mystic purifies his nature, the closer he will get to God. The more progress a group makes in their internal purifying and cleansing, the more successful

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they will be in making the transition from occasional sparks to continual witnessing of the blinding divine light; their involuntary receptions will change into controlled, voluntary observations. Reaching so high a mystic state is the result of one factor: the arising of the capacity to bear divine light, which makes witnessing the shining light last longer, just like when greater capacity to understand a branch of science .increases the time period of the activity and its voluntary recall in the brain

The Mystic's Relationship with the Universe: The mystic can go three ways in his -۳ :relationship with the universe in order to reach God

a) Realizing the immense glory of the universe

Observing the order and harmony of the universe

Feeling life in nature

The mystic should see the universe as a great place of worship for the pilgrims of .divine truth

The Mystic's Relationship with His Fellow Beings: The mystic's behavior toward -۴ other people is based on the fact that all human beings are virtually dignified. However, people are different, so the mystic treats them differently, too. He can easily get close to those who are advancing on the path to perfection, for they are of

his kind. But he cannot feel close to the people who have fallen astray of the truth, and have drowned in their desires. Yet, the mystic always tries to do his best to bring them back to the right path

Mystics and the Order and Harmony of Life

It is necessary for a mystic to observe order, discipline and harmony in every aspect ,of life. Unfortunately

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some so-called "mystics and Sufis" neither have a disciplined, orderly life themselves .nor invite others to do so

Slyness, meanness, and scolding are not acceptable in true mysticism. Being messy and irresponsible has no place in Islamic mysticism; it even makes the religion .obsolete

Mysticism, Work and Effort

In this world, which is actually a contest to do good, work and effort is the most important element. When man is doing physical or mental work, he is in fact dealing with divine symbols. Islam regards any kind of work and effort aiming to adjust and .improve his own or others' physical or spiritual life as equal to worshipping God

In this kind of mysticism, treating the wounds of someone injured is equal to calling God's name in the middle of the night. Indeed, when a mystic fits a bolt or a nut in a machine useful to man's life, or ploughing the earth to plant what man needs, bending over in a laboratory to look through a microscope and study the structure of living beings, the student's look at the teacher's mouth, are all the same as worshipping .God directly

Mysticism and Power

Mysticism makes man use his power on the path to intelligible life. It harnesses power. In mysticism, power never opposes righteousness, for power is truly, originally

righteous, and cannot bear any other identity. The mystic controls and directs his power on the path toward perfection, and never abuses it. As he has dominant .knowledge of the universe, his scope of man and the universe is much higher

Mysticism and Politics

Some people

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think there is no relevance between politics and mysticism, for the former involves managing people's social life, whereas the latter is a personal spiritual state. They do not realize that if we are to take every aspect into consideration, politics will be .related to mysticism too, as it is to the arts, culture and moral ethics

If we accept the fact that politics means managing the members of the society and paying attention to their highest physical and spiritual goals – which is only feasible through activating all human aspects and potentials in both individual and social domains – we can no longer neglect mysticism, which actually aims to develop human .potentials. Mysticism safeguards politics from Machiavellian hands

Mysticism and the Society

Mysticism makes the people in the society feel connected and united toward each other. Man will never reach supreme mystic states by isolating himself from others and heading for divinity alone. It is the mystic's duty to serve the well-being of the .members of his society, not to keep away from them

Mysticism, Wisdom and Science

Wisdom and science help the human self-dominate the universe. Some mystics regard wisdom and science as a veil. It can be so, when it serves to make man hide behind selfishness and overconfidence. Even mysticism itself, if used as the means to decorate the human nature, can become a thick veil that prevents the heart from witnessing righteousness – God. Mysticism can be a much thicker veil than science .and wisdom

Science and wisdom can be quite enlightening for the mystic, for they

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reveal facts and realities to him. Some have imagined that mystic facts either need no reasoning or cannot be reasoned at all. As Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) :says

پای استدلالیان چوبین بود پای چوبین سخت بی تمکین بود

عقل رنجور آورد پیش طبیب لیک نبود در دوا حکمش مصیب

آن نمیدانست عقل پای سست که سبو دائم ز جو ناید درست

عقل، بند رهروان است ای پسر آن رها کن ره عیان است ای پسر

Those who insist on reasoning and deduction stand on wooden legs, which are very) weak. Wisdom takes the sick patient to the doctor, whereas it knows neither medicine nor the truth about its ailment. Thus, the treatment on the wisdom will be totally ineffective. The weakly-founded wisdom did not realize that the jar cannot always fir into the stream and be filled up. Wisdom obeys Intelligible thinkers, those who act (.wisely and thoughtfully; so leave it alone, for it knows its own way quite well

In fact, Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi is condemning the partial wisdom method which always tends to perform reasoning and deduction. There is no doubt that man needs science and knowledge; yet, the human soul can see and receive things totally .incomparable to what science and knowledge can do

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Reasoning is one of man's most important faculties. What Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi means is that theoretical wisdom is not free of error. He believes it a blessing, .but it can also lead to war and conflict

It cannot be denied that the mystic receives many facts about his relationship with man, God and the universe through science; nevertheless, this kind of perception is

.not obvious and independent of reasoning for others

A great deal of information about the realities needed to receive mystic witnessing and its reasons and conditions should be presented to normal people before they can comprehend mystic realities. In other words, descriptions, definitions and reasoning .are essential preliminaries to reaching mystic states

Even Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi, mentioning that the supporters of rationalism and dialectics have a weak standing, has not completely defied reasoning, because Jalal-addin Muhammad's style includes a lot of reasoning, and taking his poetry into consideration, we realize that he tends to defy the kinds of reasoning that people use .to show off to others

Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) has used reasoning to prove mystic facts about ۲۵ times. We must remember, however, that mystic witnessing itself needs no reasoning, but the reasons and conditions that make it happen or inhibit it, and the effects it presents can be subject to discussion. Mystic evidence itself goes far beyond .reasoning

Mysticism and Jihad

It is God's will that the human nature head for perfection in this world. There are many impurities and thorns on the path to perfection that can harm not

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only pure hearts, but also others. Thus, in true mysticism, both the development and training of pure human natures and uprooting all impurities and thorns are considered as important. In other words, guiding those rich in potentials toward perfection on one hand, and removing disruptive persons from the path to development on the other are both of high importance in true mysticism. This is why jihad against enemies – .internal or external – is a basic principle in original mysticism

Criticizing Nonsense

Those who claimed 'I am truth,' 'There is nothing in me except for God,' and 'How pure and glorious my being is!' have definitely activated their 'self' to an expanded level of mental control over the universe; however, having reached that unusual state, instead of continuing their progress toward the peaks of divine perfection, they overemphasized their 'self' – which could have gone on to reach God – stopped making progress, using their self like a mirror spread before them, thinking that is .divine greatness

Vertigo halfway on the path (even if we can say they have gone half the way) could not distinguish molten iron from real fire. If they had processed their 'self' correctly, they would say, 'I am from truth, with truth, and heading for truth' instead of, 'I am truth,' 'There is nothing in me except things that are from God, for God, and heading for God,' instead of, 'There is nothing in me except for God,' and, 'How glorious and pure God is!" and, 'My

greatness, dignity and existence is from God, for God and heading for God!' instead of, '!'How glorious and pure my being is

Some intellectuals, including Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi), regard such expressions as rude, and attempt to correct them by saying that man is capable of reaching God's divine presence, but when he does, he mistakes God with himself, and incorrectly says these things. Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi adds that despite all .this, being present but rude is better than not being there at all

بی ادب حاضر ز غایب خوشتر است حلقه گر چه کژ بود، نی بر در است

Being rude and present is better than being absent; the handle of a door may not be) (!straight, but it's still there on the door

Such excuses are rude themselves, and being in God's presence is incomparable to any other presence. When in the presence of God, man cannot make a single mistake, let alone be rude. Even if his rudeness were possibly excusable – which it absolutely is

not – such words are academically and developmentally wrong and spread corruption in the society. Being in God's presence and claiming to be truth itself should not be .mistaken

Religion, Rule of Life, and the Truth

Some of those who claim to be mystics believe that religion (shari 'at), rule of life (tariqat) and the truth (haqiqat) are distinctly separate things. Religion, they claim, consists of the means that guides the mystic seeker toward the truth – his ultimate goal – and when he

.reaches it, he needs religion no more

Religion, the rule of life and the truth are different forms of the same reality, preached by all holy prophets, men of wisdom and true mystics. Literally, Shari 'at refers to the way of reaching what man or God wants. Thus, religion – Shari'at – includes the rule of life, too. Islam and the Holy Qur'an also believe that having faith in God and doing good deeds is religion, and is the way to reach spiritual perfection. What is important is the path to the truth, but Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) and some others believe that having reached the truth, man does not need religion or rule of life .anymore

The truth has also been described by various expressions, like "reaching God" or ".“perceiving the absolute mortality of the universe in divinity

The truth should not be regarded as the ultimate point of development and perfection – so that religion and rule of life are subsequent stages on its path. Any step man takes obeying God's orders is virtually moving toward the truth. Such a spiritual movement and progress should not end at a point entitled "reaching the truth." The process infinitely goes on, and religion, rule of life and the truth are combinable at any .level

In fact, man's distance from God should not be considered as infinite, on which

religion and rule of life are located, and the truth is situated at the end of the path. If the mystic intends to enter divine

attraction, he can reach his destination without going through the path. When Moses asked God how he could reach Him, God replied, “The decision to reach Me means ”.reaching Me

It is wrong to believe that the truth is the end of a long path of spiritual endeavor, and that religion and rule of life are milestones on the path. Any footstep we take in accordance with God's commands, the slightest particle of dust we remove from the .mirror of our souls, takes us closer and closer to the absolute truth

Separating religion, rule of life and the truth from each other can lead to these :harmful effects

۱ - Those in search of the truth will be deprived of it, for religion is not virtually .desirable; only following it is the means to reach the truth

۲ - There will be a conflict between science and wisdom – the best tools for seeking .the truth –and love and mysticism

۳- Although they are not, materials and meanings will seem to conflict; it is, in fact, the .incapability of the mystic in realizing the natural cycle

Mystic Change

Mystic change provides the knowledge for the preliminary action, which in turn provides the preliminary for the next knowledge. The first step of knowledge makes man “wake up,” and deeply dominate the universe. This knowledge makes him take action, competing against others in doing good and heading for perfection. Each deed .done with pure intentions leads to new knowledge

If man takes each reality he understands seriously, his knowledge will increase, and his

deeds will also become more meaningful. Anything fulfilling one of man's needs is a truth to be taken seriously. In the initial steps of evolutional mystic change, the knowledge of the truth and its actions are considered as separate, but when man's .character develops mystically, his knowledge and action will find supreme unity

Arts and Aesthetics

point

:Human knowledge includes four different viewpoints on art

Purely scientific viewpoint: Direct contact of the senses with realities. At times, - ۱ physical devices may also assist our senses in contacting the facts around us. Science .uses the senses and the necessary equipment to discover laws

Theoretical viewpoint: In any branch of science, there are some unsolved, - ۲ unproven issues called theoretical problems. For example, one of the theoretical issues of physics is whether electrons are waves or matter. We do not exactly know .which one they are, so such problems cannot be considered as purely scientific

:Philosophical viewpoint can be categorized into three types -۳

;a)general information of the primary results and products of science

;b) issues pertaining to the origin of the universe, not observable reality

.c) issues related to values, including the “Do’s and Don’ts” of moral ethics

The religious viewpoint consists of recognizing and accepting realities and acting in -۴ accordance with them – provided that, of course, such a recognition and acceptance be man’s duty, and guide him toward the aim of his life. The religious viewpoint enables goal-seeking man to associate the scientific, theoretical and philosophical .viewpoints with each other, and find them non-contradicting

Four Various Viewpoints on Art

Art, another component of human

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:life, can also be viewed from the four angles mentioned above

The purely scientific point of view considers the observable outcomes of art and - ۱ .their content

The theoretical viewpoint studies the role of the artist's personal senses in his work - ۲ .compared to the role of reality

The philosophical point of view takes the fundamental aspects of art into - ۳ .consideration

The religious viewpoint consists of the knowledge of art and making use of it in - ۴ .order to achieve the evolutionary ends of life

The Philosophical Viewpoint on Art

Here, we will only focus on discussing philosophical views on the arts. There are :several points to keep in mind about philosophical analyses of art

Most people and even many artists, consider the work of art as a device to merely - ۱ impress people and satisfy them aesthetically. Many people only expect a work of art to stir a few waves inside them. However, the revolution inside the audience or spectators of works of art should be the start of an evolutionary metamorphosis in their character. The true artist does not tend to fascinate people, or stir up their .feelings

By means of the work of art, the artist makes contact with other human beings' - ۲ souls, for a work of art can only have value to people; no animal is capable of enjoying or using it correctly. Hence, we may conclude that a work of art should be .advantageous to both the artist's and the people's souls

If an artist considers his/her work of art effective in the development or degradation

of other human beings, he/she will use all of his/her mental and spiritual talents in .order to create a work of art that can help mankind flourish and develop

Although an artist uses abstraction and imagination on observable facts and mental concepts to create a work of art, many artists unfortunately only pay attention to the work of art itself, and ignore the modification, adjustment and activation of their own mental and psychological powers and potentials which should be the factor creating the work of art. If man's innate talents are discovered and devised properly, his feelings are purified and his works of art will be much more valuable. When an artist moves on the path toward perfection, his potentials are properly activated, his emotions elevated, and the work of art he creates will definitely help the progress and .perfection of mankind, not just excite them momentarily

Art for art's sake or art for man's sake? There are two different viewpoints on an -۳ .artist's relationship with people

a) Some believe that art is virtually desirable, for art conveys the genius of the artist, and no law or criterion should confine it. Limiting art will inhibit the artist's genius, for it is not his concern what effect his work will have on others. The artist's creativity should not be influenced for the sake of others. These people believe that “being interesting” is more important than the truth. It is sufficient that a work of art is appealing; whether it harms or helps others

.is of no importance. It should only entertain

b) Some others believe that art, like other mental products of man, is for the society to use, so harmful works of art should not be displayed in public. This theory claims that .art belongs to the society, not to art or the artist himself

Art should belong to man – “human art for humans”, or “art for man in an intelligible life.” Thus, whether the society accepts the work of art or not is not enough. A work of

art accepted in one society may be rejected by another; the proper criterion is man's .development and perfection

If an artist is not internally purified, his work of art may be not only of no use to man, but even harmful. Every artist creates his works of art by means of his own mental perceptions and internal tendencies. If Thomas Hobbes, for instance, were asked to produce a work of art about man, his pessimistic point of view would definitely .dominate the result

.This is due to man's ultra-artistic value and the significance of the human soul

Although some poems by poets such as Abul-Ala Moayyeri, some quadrants pertaining to Khayyam, and some of Sadegh Hedayat's writings are literarily quite interesting, the more interesting thing is the human souls which, having read such works, fall into deep anxiety, and end up in nihilism. On the other hand, Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) poetry has saved thousands from nihilism toward God. Thus, unless minds are not purified and refined

by correct education and training, "art for the sake of art," although opening the way for activating genius, is absolutely unacceptable, for it may activate the genius of .some illogical minds

We must mention intelligible life here, for art should serve man in an intelligible life, not merely serve man. Otherwise, anyone, especially politicians, would begin to interpret humanity with his own mental perceptions. This is where all the various .points of view and interpretations arise

Human art for humans means not censoring art, but supporting man's intelligible life. Studying works of art should not be limited to form and appearance; content is also highly significant. Of course, in truly original art, "appearance, form, content, appeal and reality" make a single unit. A work of art that looks beautiful but is corrupt .content-wise is not acceptable

For example, if a filmmaker makes a movie defying man's freedom and free will, and skillfully proves that internal freedom does not exist, and that the only existent authority is that of law and power, will that make an acceptable work of art? Art in the West nowadays only serves to provide people's lives with variety and amusement, not to contribute to any development or to guide them toward an intelligible life. Do ?worthless works of art that show sex guide man toward perfection – or doom

Pursuant Art, Pioneer Art

Like other phenomena related to man, art can be categorized into two kinds: pursuant and pioneer. Pursuant art depends upon the desires and tendencies of the society, and thus so does

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:the artist. Some characteristics of pursuant art are

Since a pursuant artist depends on the people, he uses the people's desires and -۱ .likes as the criterion for his work

In pursuant art, the artist does not care what is proper or what should be. He -۲ merely selects what people like. Such art fades away quickly, and has no historical .value

Since pursuant art has nothing to do with the great goals of life, it cannot bring -۳ .about true unity among people

A pursuant artist cannot convey any great themes or elevated thoughts, for all he -۴ .does is follow what the people want

On the contrary, pioneer art does not obey the people's demands. Although a pioneer artist does not isolate himself from his people and surroundings, he does refine the current realities to extract the real truth and align them with intelligible life. He makes ".use of "what there is" to the benefit of "what there should be

In this kind of art, the artist purifies people's illusions and speculations. The pioneer

artist tries to guide the people toward an intelligible life by means of his works of art. In pioneer art, the artist – who wants art for the sake of man in an intelligible life – begins with showing the universe like a small, objective, meaningful work of art which .is beautiful and motivates others toward evolutionary development

Modernism in Art

The human soul has a tendency toward modernism, which is itself valuable, for it arises from the desire for serious mental and psychological

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freedom for man in his four relationships (with God, himself, the universe and other human beings). If freedom in these four relationships reaches the level of development and prosperity, man's soul will achieve delight in his intelligible life. Although one should not be bound to the past, ignoring original realities for .modernism is not acceptable, either

?Why does the human soul have a tendency for new, modern things

,a) Removing boredom and monotony from his life

b) Possibly – or definitely – achieving newer, enjoyable facts that provide man with ,joy and liveliness

,c) Modernism can expand man's self throughout the universe

d) Man feels that by means of modernism, he can free himself from imitating others' .thoughts and knowledge

True, original modernism in art is the one that can free man's spirit and soul to make .contact with God, the universe and other human beings, and achieve spiritual joy

Artists

:Let us categorize artists into three groups

Those greatly interested in the arts, who can fairly understand a work of art. - ۱ Although they can't make forensic, accurate analyses of a work of art, their good .taste for art helps them make sound judgments

Professional artists who possess enough skill, talent and intelligence to create - ۲ works of art. Some professional artists merely make works of art with limited creativity; others, however, also have a sort of artistic manner and finesse. Those are .the ones talented enough to create real innovations

Constructive, pioneer artists, who are capable of very strong mental and - ۳ psychological artistic activities. Some of their characteristics

:include

- ,Ingenuity and creativity
- ,good choice-making
- ,sufficient knowledge
- ,accuracy and finesse in making a relationship with their work
- the power to free themselves from rules that limit innovation, and
- .the freedom they get from doing that, which causes creativity

.Pioneer artists have activated their intrinsic, hidden potentials and talents

There some points of importance in developing and activating potentials and talents :toward creativity

Art students should be trained so that their art serves their intelligible life, not mere .pleasures and beauty

Confidence and hope should be aroused and reinforced in them; they should realize

that by means of patience and effort, they can move toward development and .perfection

.Art teachers should also have the required patience and affection for their students

Art students should realize the importance of paying attention to the great world they have inside them, and that they should pay attention to their work, not what others .remark about it

A healthy society also has an important role in stimulating and developing talents. An unsound, corrupt society prevents the artist from making use of his/her internal .powers

Art students should avoid imitation. Of course, this is not easy, for all human beings .tend to imitate others. Here is where the trainers' duty proves more crucial

Art students should be trained so that they learn to appreciate their works of art for the sake of their own original, true self, not the praise they got from others; man naturally enjoys being praised and rewarded, but if artists work for rewards

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and praises, their works will aim to please the public, and lose all their originality and .authenticity

Various Types of Beauty

:There are four different groups of beauty

Physical beauty -۱

Abstract beauty, like the beauty of freedom, science and legitimate power -۲

Intelligible, value-based beauty, such as the beauty of justice, chastity and courage -۳

Absolute beauty -۴

:We may, however, consider another classification, too

Intellect-based beauty -۱

Physical beauty -۲

Physical beauty based on intellect-based, like intellectual ideals and ideas -۳

Intellectual beauty based on physical beauty, like poetry containing fine, elevating -۴ .meanings

Some Western intellectuals disapprove of the above categorizations, and confine beauty to physical beauty. The human spirit, however, has beauties of its own. Eliminating fine, intelligible beauties from the human soul will make beauty rigid and spiritless. Our astonishment at the beauty of the spirit of a finely developed human being is sometimes so great that no physical kind of beauty can possibly ever match it. The beauty of the pure, chaste conscience of a human being can amaze a human .being much greater than watching the blue sky amaze his eyes

:There are three reasons why ethics are sometimes separated from beauty

First, the greed some people in the West have for gaining profits and advantage. If moral ethics keep its place in beauty, these greedy profiteers would fail, and many .corruptions and misconducts would vanish

.Secondly, the inadvertent trend toward issues limited to the senses in the West

The third reason is that if moral ethics are regarded as beauty, they would all immediately refer to God and religion, the source

of all moral ethics. Since some Westerners, however, have no belief in God or religion, .they have emptied arts of any form of moral ethics

The Truth about Beauties

Much controversy exists among scholars of aesthetics on what the truth about beauties is. Some think beauty is an observable effect in which the human mind plays ".no role except reflecting it. They believe beauty is "virtually external

Some others consider a mental aspect for beauty, and believe it is the human mind that decides which phenomena are beautiful. They consider beauty as "virtually .internal," free from any sensory aspects

Beauties are bi-polar, dependant upon both the senses and the structure of man's existence. We must criticize the first theory – that regards beauty as a merely .observable effect – from several points of view

If the human mind has no influence except for merely reflecting a physical fact, -۱ then where does the joy and pleasure in seeing beauties come from? Why doesn't man consider all physical things as beautiful? Why are only some of them beautiful to him? The pleasure and enjoyment we get from beauties shows that the human mind .and spirit play a role in understanding and appreciating beauties

Encountering beauties, we sometimes interpret and analyze them, using our - ۲ internal feelings. In other words, our internal aspects and desires are involved in the .artistic analysis and criticism

Some forms of beauty are not observable physically; there are intellectual beauties -۳ .that cannot be given any innately external aspect

The second theory, which considers solely an internal aspect

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to beauty and defies any observable effect in them, should be criticized for ignoring the fact that not all natural phenomena appeal to the human taste for aesthetics; only some of them do. If beauty were not related with physically observable aspects, we would treat everything equally; however, it is not so, and some of them appeal to us .more than others

We can approve of the third theory, which on one hand believes that beauties are real – whether enjoyed by humans or not – and this is their virtually external aspect. On the other hand, it is only man who is capable of understanding, appreciating and enjoying beauty because of his mental and psychological structure; no animal reacts .toward beauties. This is the virtually internal aspect of beauty

The bi-polar quality of beauty makes beauty become a relative issue, for all phenomena are on one hand different – for instance, the beauty of a single flower is quite different from that of a bunch of colorful flowers of various kinds – and on the other hand, people also have different mental and spiritual states, and cannot .understand and appreciate beauties the same

The reasoning Plato and Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi) have presented defying observable beauty is also acceptable, for beauties are so diverse that no observable similarity can exist between them. As Plato believes, what resemblance can there be between moonlight and a brown flower with beautiful white spots? Secondly, observable phenomena are prone to change, so it is not possible

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to derive concepts that can be fixed, constant realities and serve as virtually internal or external phenomena that can be understandable for everyone. Accepting Plato's .reasoning does not mean, however, that his theory of similarity is totally correct

:When discussing beauty, there are three points we should keep in mind

There are realities inside man that "can be activated by means of more thought, - ۱ :useful experiences and purity in receiving intelligible beauties and ideals, for

گر بود اندیشه‌ات گل، گلشنی ور بود خاری، تو هیمه گلخنی

If your thoughts are as pure as flowers, you yourself are also as fine as a garden; if) they are thorns, however, you are nothing but thorns, either. In other words, man's (.humanity depends on his mental state

(Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi

The human soul, by improving its pure, fine thoughts, can be a virtually internal garden of flowers; it does not mean that the flowers we see in the world are made by .man's inside, for the human soul can mix with beauties

عقل گردی، عقل را دانی کمال عشق گردی، عشق را یابی جمال

If you are to understand reason and wisdom, you must devote your whole existence) to reason and wisdom; it's like love, where you can't find the beauty of love unless you (.fall on love yourself

(Jalal-addin Muhammad Molawi (Rumi

As the Holy Prophet of Islam says, "If you want to see Resurrection

Day – and, in general, anything – you must start a resurrection, an upheaval in ".yourself first

۲ - Beauties exist in the world outside, and can sooth the human soul. By making contact with the beauties of nature and intelligible beauties, man can overcome the .fatalistic, machine-like quality of life, and make his soul delicate and tender

۳ - In contact with beauties, man realizes that apart from creating the universe, God also provided enough beauty to please man internally, attract him toward God and .make him move on the path to divinity

The Virtually Internal Pole of Beauties

:Man's virtually internal pole in regard to beauties has several aspects

۱ - Awareness about the universe: As a living being, man sometimes gains profound .knowledge of the universe and the amazing events in it

۲ - Variety-seeking in man's life: Monotonous affairs make man feel depressed and

bored. Seeing even the most beautiful things without any variety will not please him. If someone looks at the same beautiful picture all the time, he/she will get bored, for the picture is a rigid result of the artistic taste and talent of its creator, not his/her mental .states or artistic talent

Observing a human being is not tiresome, however, for it conveys the glory of life and the universe. This is precisely the immensely significant point that separates a beautiful piece of natural scenery, with its special life and flowers rooted in the streams, from a work of art or plastic flowers, for the connection of a flower to the stream of the lively universe prevents

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it from becoming limited and lifeless; this is what prevents man's variety-seeking .taste of life from getting bored

Intelligible beauties: Ideals such as justice, freedom and sacrifice – essential to - ۳ spiritual evolution – are regarded as beauties. If separated from observable beauties, .the unity and balance between man's life and spirit will vanish

The Virtually External Pole of Beauties

:The aspects of the virtually external pole of beauties are

The dependence of the universe upon God:By feeling himself and the universe - ۱ dependent upon God, man can better observe the immense, wise glory and beauty in .the universe. In other words, there is both beauty and order in the universe

The relation between the part, the parts and the whole in beauty:When discussing - ۲ beauty, we should not analyze each of its smaller components and search each one for beauty, and having not found it, question the total beauty. Although the whole consists of these parts, the quality of the whole is not necessarily derived from adding the quality of each one of them separately. In fact, the beauty arises from the human .mind contacting the whole system

The Differences between Observable Beauty and Intelligible Beauty

:We will now discuss some of their differences

a) Man perceives observable beauties by means of his senses, but he cannot directly do that in the case of intellect-based beauties, where he must use human values and principles; even if observable beauties have any influence here, it will only be limited .to serving as a code or signal for intellect-based beauty

b) Observable affairs including beauty can be subject to quantitative calculations, but intellect-based

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.beauties arise in the human character, which cannot undergo any calculations

c) Observable beauties lose their appeal after some time, whereas intellect-based beauty always remains attractive, like the pleasure man gets from the beauty of .justice, free will or freedom

d) How the two forms of beauties are felt and witnessed is also different. In observable beauty, physically physical effects bring about the realization, but in intellect-based beauty, it is accepting the immensity of mental activities that is .effective

The Definition of Beauty

Beauty is the recorded effect of perfection, and perfection is being located on the path of what is deserved and proper – except for when the beauty is two-dimensional, like man, who may be externally beautiful, but immensely filthy .internally

According to this definition, all beauties, even the physically observable ones, have a :trace of perfection in them. There are three reasons to prove this

If a beautiful phenomenon consists of components, they must be proportionate - ۱

and orderly. For example, if a flower is regarded as beautiful, its shape, situation and .color must be well-balanced, so that every part of it is proportionate and harmonious

Beauty has a virtually internal aspect, i.e. without man's intrinsic, natural interest in -۲ beauties, he could never appreciate them; the mere internal reception is a virtual .greatness for man itself

If a phenomenon is not beautiful, man will not enjoy it. This is quite apparent in the -۳ .case of intellect-based beauties

Suppose in a beautiful landscape, somebody very dear or close to us is killed brutally; will that piece of

scenery still seem beautiful to us? If a few drops of the blood of somebody very dear to us, killed brutally in a crime, is placed on a work of art, and adds greatly to its beauty in the eyes of anyone not knowing about the killed dear one, will it also seem ?beautiful to us? Does the beauty of a beloved seem as beautiful to others, too

This is why we added this statement to the definition of beauty: 'except for when the beauty is two-dimensional, like man, who may be externally beautiful but internally '.filthy.' In Persian literature, this is described as 'a snake with beautiful lines and spots

گفت لیلی را خلیفه کآن تویی کز تو مجنون شد پریشان و غوی

از دگر خوبان تو افزون نیستی گفت خامش چون تو مجنون نیستی

دیده مجنون اگر بودی تو را هر دو عالم بیخطر بودی تو را

Are you Leili, whom Majnoun is so crazy about?” the caliph asked Leili, Majnoun's) beloved. “Are you the one who has him wandering in the deserts? You're not outstandingly beautiful; what has Majnoun seen in you that has caused such a storm in him?” Leili replied, “ Yes, you should ask that, for you are not Majnoun. If you

did see like he does, you would willingly devote everything you have, ready to face all (.the perils of both worlds

What Jalal-addin Muhammad Rumi means here is that if you watch this world – or .even both worlds – with purity, you will become fascinated and infatuated by it

Perfection and greatness is the basis for beauty, so the more aspects and dimensions of perfection and greatness a beautiful phenomenon has, and the more familiar its viewers are with those aspects, the greater the intuitive feeling of beauty will be. Such .intuitive visions of beauty are something not many people can have

What Does Whitehead Tell Us? A Critique of a Book

point

Alfred North Whitehead (۱۸۶۱-۱۹۴۸) is one of the greatest intellectuals of our time. He and Bertrand Russell co-wrote the famous ۳-volume Mathematical Principia. Whitehead did not confine himself to abstract issues in philosophy; his ideas cover a vast range including culture, civilization, aesthetics, art, moral ethics and social issues. He wrote The Adventures of Ideas in ۱۹۳۲. "The book, in fact," he said, "is a study of the concept of civilization and an effort toward understanding

how developed beings develop. Along with Science and the Modern World and Process and Reality, it endeavors to understand the nature of objects and show how such a way of understanding can be illustrated by means of studying the ".developments of human experience

Whitehead is one of the greatest thinkers the West has ever seen. His ideas are .greatly profound. Whitehead had a vast knowledge of the history of human thoughts

His information on Islam, unfortunately, is insufficient, which is probably why he fell .into wrong ideas about it

However, Whitehead had profound thoughts on the supernatural, which is quite rare

for a scholar of mathematics, logic and physics. His thoughts in the fields of anthropology and human development are also quite significant. One of his great qualities is that he does not limit himself to theoretical wisdom, and considered acquiring philosophy as highly important in providing man with knowledge about himself and the universe. His “chaste, elegant writing style,” was another quality of .Whitehead's that contrasted with Russell

Unlike other Western philosophers like Hume, Freud, Sartre, and Camus whose ideas .on mankind were incorrect, many of Whitehead's ideas are quite correct

If we regard some of the Western ideas as the errors of civilization, Whitehead's ”.ideas – this book in particular – provide the right answers

Now let us take into consideration some of the issues we disagree with Whitehead concerning the history of thought, philosophy, the truth, God, religion, the ultimate .reason, man, moral ethics, freedom, art, human civilization and Islam

The History of Ideas

Whitehead believes that the history of ideas has had a dual progress, for it has been influenced both by the fatalistic factors of history and also man's self-conscious ideals. Barbarians of the ancient times and the steam engines of modern ages, he states, “were unintelligent factors of their own era that made civilizations deviate ”.from the order they had inherited from their predecessors

On the other hand, he writes that

Christianity and democracy “arose out of ideals compiled self-consciously, quite in conflict with the religions and beliefs their ancestors made and their societies ”.protected

The history of thoughts is dual in nature – man's physical and mental effects – but whereas Whitehead does

not provide the criterion for the dual aspects, Allamah Ja'fari believes that the criterion is actually man's dual nature itself. Man has a material, natural aspect which makes him try to continue his life; on the other hand, he also has a spiritual aspect, which aims for greatness, for perfection. Some historical phenomena arise from man's purely natural life, while some others originate from his perfectionist aspect. Prophets of God and true men of wisdom and philosophy have endeavored to adjust .and improve the former aspect – man's natural life

Whitehead emphasizes that historians always present their own point of view of history. He believes that Gibbon's history of the world is in fact Gibbon's side of the story. Indeed, historians are influenced by their own mental states and tendencies when analyzing history. In other words, historians study history as they wish. If they believe that some phenomena are caused by certain reasons, they think other people have the same idea, too. For example, if a historian believes that selfishness is the most important factor influencing man's actions, his historical analyses will also tend .to show everything as a result of selfishness

The history of our ideas," Whitehead writes, "arises out of our beliefs about history; it" is a result of

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".our own mental viewpoints

This is not generally correct, for then all history books would be worthless, merely describing their authors' character or viewpoints. It is the duty of historians and historical analysts to record history as it happened, and present their analyses separate from the facts; report and interpretation should not be mixed. Some .historians have, in fact, done just that

One of the points that Whitehead emphasizes is, "Oversimplifying is a great hazard in ".the history of ideas

We also agree that not all philosophical or scientific issues of high importance can be

oversimplified so that everyone may understand them. Supreme perception cannot be degraded for everyone to enjoy; in fact, attempts toward simplifying supreme .truths is not only impossible, but also harmful

Philosophy and the Truth

Whitehead considers several results and advantages for philosophical thoughts when .discussing philosophy and the truth

Evaluating the truth -۱

Continuing one's visions and insights on the future -۲

The feeling of the value of life -۳

Feeling the crucial significance of endeavors for civilization -۴

Reaching life -۵

: He believes that

philosophy is the study of possibilities and comparing them with facts. It evaluates“ the truth, theories, various alternatives, and ideals altogether. Clairvoyance, being future-looking, and the feeling about the value of life are positive aspects of history; ”.in a word, the feeling of importance that gives life to all endeavors about civilization

Philosophy can fulfill the third and fifth items; i.e. it cannot show man the feeling of the value of life or how to reach it, for philosophy only describes man and the universe

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as it is. It only describes values; it does not evaluate them or speak of how they .should be

,On the issue of values, he believes

Philosophy usually describes values, rather than evaluating them or discussing how“

they should be. Such a significant job falls into domains based on wisdom, not philosophies arising from predetermined principles or accepting 'what there is' ".without studying or evaluating them

Whitehead has a particular point of view concerning human intellect, too. He believes that human intellect cannot choose what is best for man. To make the correct choice, .man must use wisdom

Our actions arise from our knowledge. We wake up, and – eagerly or hatefully,“ actively amplifying or weakening – get involved in a process, or begin setting new goals. I call the former flow – the presumption of self-consciousness – instinct. It is an experience arising directly out of individual or environmental inheritance. Furthermore, after our instincts and intellect have done their part, our decisions determine how the two of them combine. That I call wisdom, which moderates the ".intellect and provides certain results for each kind of circumstances

Thus, Whitehead regards wisdom as much higher than intellect or philosophy. We believe that if theoretical intelligence alone could lead man to his goals, there would never be so much debate and disagreement among various doctrines and schools of thought. Wisdom involves moving from the elementary toward results. Philosophy concerns man and the universe as they are, whereas wisdom also pays attention to the factors that can guide

.man toward development and perfection

Wisdom consists of knowledge about objective life in an objective universe and acting according to that knowledge, which considers man as a part of the entire harmony of the universe; thus, every moment of man's life is suitable and appropriate, for he is .heading for greatness and perfection

Whitehead regards instinct, intellect and wisdom as three vital, inseparable factors. .Without wisdom, he sees a disastrous end for mankind

About the truth, Whitehead believes that for a certain issue, being interesting is more :important than being true

The appeal and attraction of an issue is more important than its truth… however,“ ”.truth can add to its appeal

This idea of Whitehead's calls for revision and reconsideration. The truth is definitely more valuable than being interesting, particularly since Whitehead believes that, “What we are seeking is the bare truth.” Perhaps Whitehead meant that the public look for issues that are interesting to them, and the truth underlying it is sometimes .not significant to them

The point is the appeal factor, which depends upon the mental and psychological state of the individual. Since this differs in people, issues are interesting to them in different ways and degrees, too. What man needs is to learn the logic of reality. He must know which facts are vitally important. A phenomenon may seem fabulous, but .prove after analysis and study to be filthy and inappropriate

For example, someone we like may win a match, and it may seem wonderful to us at first, but then we learn

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that he won by cheating. Since fraud and cruelty are not compatible with the laws of human life, his victory should not be too enjoyable to us. Appeal, in fact, should not be .the primary issue; rather, man should learn that the most important thing is the truth

:We will now analyze the “bare truth” Whitehead speaks of

۱- What is the bare truth?

۲- Can man face the purely bare truth during his whole life?

۳- Why does man avoid the bare truth?

۴- What are the consequences of veiling the truth?

The Laws of Nature

:As we know, there are four theories about the laws of nature

The "innate" theory -۱

The "instructional, fake" theory -۲

The descriptive theory -۳

The conventional theory -۴

White agrees with the first theory, in which laws exist deep inside all components of nature. The problem here is that the question why each object is different is left unanswered; it is unclear why phenomenon A has characteristics A but phenomenon .B has characteristics B

We approve of the second theory, which believes there is no continuous rope pulling all phenomena behind itself in this world. Nature and all its phenomena and effects is changing, and that is due to the divine blessings God provides from the supernatural world. Thus, the orderly flow in nature is not innate; it originates from a world much higher than nature. We also criticize David Hume's theory of innate order, for there is no order outside the universe, and the order and harmony of nature is what founds .laws

God

Whitehead's theory on the relationship

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:between God and time is another point of criticism. He believes that

God's eternal nature, which is free of time from one point of view and time-" ".dependent from another, may make intense, hostile contact with the soul

Whitehead ignores the fact that time is caused by movement, which in turn originates

from matter and the world of nature. Something far beyond matter can never possibly be fit into a framework of time.

It seems Whitehead has also fallen for the impossible task of abstracting absolutely God from time. He, like other thinkers, does not realize that time is basically the result of the movement and continuity felt innately – internally and externally – and this mental extension called time is so general that even when recognizing God, the human mind cannot do so without going through the path of time. Unless, of course, Whitehead means the visible consequences of God's qualities, like giving and taking life and other acts of God seen in nature, all of which flow through time.

Whitehead, like many other Western thinkers, cannot solve the problem of belonging and depending upon God:

“The concept of impossibility that even God cannot overcome has for many centuries been on theologians' minds.”

This shows how little Whitehead knows of the great and detailed principles of theology. He does not realize the fact that power never applies to impossible acts.

Another thing is how Whitehead analyzes Plato's viewpoint about God:

“Plato's religion is based upon what he imagines about what God may be a God originating from Plato's

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fascination about eternal beauty.”

As Whitehead interprets Plato's thoughts, God is a being “staring at forms of eternal beauty.” We must disagree, for God, the most comprehensive of all greatness and perfection, does not only see eternal beauty; all the glory and beauty of the universe are also watching Him. The more important problem here is using the term “staring” about God, for nothing in the universe can surprise God and make Him stare at it. We also disagree with the idea of God's joy used by Avicenna. We can say that perhaps

Whitehead is referring to Plato's fascination, not God's fascination about eternal .beauty

Whitehead also mentions, when discussing Plato's thoughts on science and :philosophy, that

Plato also had in mind the lack of order and harmony in nature. He openly defies an“ absolute power as the creator of the universe. The influence and dominance of thoughts are always encouraging, but merely leads to the possible harmonies, even though Plato is unsteady about this, and sometimes writes in a way that it seems he considers the creator of the universe as having order and harmony due to His ”.supreme will

We disagree with this interpretation; for – first of all – defying the order and harmony of the universe contradicts Plato's other thoughts. Plato believes that this world is a shadow of another world, which has order and harmony, so its shadow must also be orderly and harmonious. Furthermore, Plato's defiance of an absolute creating power leads to another contradiction, for he accepts

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God's will, and uses it to describe the systematic order of the world. Power is one of ?the factors of will; how can one who accepts will defy power

Religion

Whitehead has a quite positive viewpoint on religion, and all in all, there are quite few occasions where we should criticize his thoughts on religion. One of Whitehead's :positive points on religion is

But the ultimate ideals that religions safeguard are strong criticisms of current“ ”.habits

This viewpoint on religion is acceptable, for Whitehead does not associate abuse of religion with religion itself, and considers religion as having a quite effective role in

man's life. Whitehead has, of course, distinguished religion itself from religious institutions, for the latter have generally been supporters of social customs and .habits

Whitehead believes that religion sees the events and occurrences in the universe as .repeatable, and everything will reoccur many times until the end of the world

Mystical religion says that shadows are passing by, but man's experience whispers“ that they will come again and again. 'Calm down,' religion adds, 'for there is an end to .all this repetition

Islam and all divine religions in general, all facts and events in the universe and various aspects of man's life which are dependant upon God's will and wisdom know that their occurrence in the universe is based on rules and principles; no phenomenon or event is repeatable. The superficial similarity phenomena and events have should ,not be mistaken. As the Holy Qur’an says

يسئله من فى السموات و الارض كل يوم هو فى

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شان

Whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth implore Him; every day He is upon some“ (labor.”(۵۵:۲۹

:Another statement of Whitehead's which we must criticize is

Religion has always fluctuated between the two concepts of brotherhood among“ humans and the relationship between God and his creations, like the relationship ”.between a master and his servants

The problem here is that Islam sees all human beings as respectable in nature, and all .humans moving on the path to perfection and development are brothers

المومنون كاعضا جسد واحد اذ اشتكى منه عضو اشتكى منه الاخر

:God's relationship with his creations is not a master-servant one. as the Qur'an says

نحن اقزب اليه من حبل الوريد

".God is closer to man than even his veins"

Man's relationship with God is one of worship, and by worshipping God man can be .attracted by divinity and achieve perfection and development

On Christianity, Whitehead says that Jesus has said, "Leave Caesar's affairs to Caesar and God's affairs to God." Whitehead believes this statement was said in the era of .Tiberious' rule

Jesus could not have said something like that, despite all the historians that have quoted it. Such a statement contradicts with the philosophy of the sending of the prophets. All prophets were sent by God to guide man toward individual, social, physical and spiritual prosperity. The Qur'an also states one of the tasks of the prophets as upholding justice and equality, and that cannot be achieved if Caesar's .affairs and God's are separated

,Furthermore, if a prophet like Jesus really made such a distinction

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he would never have gotten into a conflict with the men of power of his time. All prophets, in fact, not only Jesus, fought the wealthy and the cruel, which shows they .did not intend to leave Caesar and God to their own, separate affairs

Defying the Ultimate Reason

In his book, Whitehead sometimes speaks of the ultimate reason in a way that it seems he does not accept it, or even sees belief in it as a barrier against logical :thought

"Logical ways of thought has been deteriorated and ruined ever since ancient Greece up to our times by the incorrect basic concept called the dogmatic theory of the

ultimate reason. Such errors are not limited to religious beliefs, either; they have contaminated all fields and majors. They have always dominated the atmosphere with the ultimate reason. Such emphasis has been wrong. Its dogmatic side is, ".therefore, incorrect, too

Again, we must disagree with Whitehead here, for defying the ultimate reason first calls for us to believe that the universe has arisen out of coincidence, and that there is no supreme philosophy and wisdom above it at all. But divine wisdom requires that the universe have an ultimate reason. Secondly, if there is no ultimate reason for the universe, all moral ethics and values are nothing but hallucinations; as the Iranian :poet Nasser Khusro says

روزگار و چرخ و انجم سربه سر بازیستی گرنه این روز دراز دهر را فرداستی

All this world and time and the stars are ultimately)

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(.mortal; someday, all this will come to an end, and the real world will be revealed

Whitehead is an advocate of moral ethics and values; how can he now defy the ultimate reason? The dispute among theological thinkers on determining the ultimate reason of the universe has caused some like Whitehead to be doubtful or defiant of .the ultimate reason

Man

Whitehead's interpretation of man sees man as having an extremely complicated :nature

The human nature is so complex that in a politician's eyes, social plans put on paper" ".are not even worth the paper they are written on

.This point of Whitehead's is one of his most significant

.Whitehead believes that destroying human evil is not simple

Some believe that social re-organization can be effective, but he says that “there is no ”.known way to eradicate social evil except presenting worse evil

Evil still exists in human societies because social and ideological leaders have neglected religion and moral ethics and have done nothing to improve man's nature. Also, the lack of developmental plans in human societies – despite what Whitehead thinks – is not because the human nature is complex, but due to the fact that the .human nature tends to both be selfish and greedy and also peer-loving and unselfish

If the negative aspects of man's existence are controlled by means of religion and .moral ethics, man can achieve a reasonable life

Man cannot abandon slavery and exploitation without having deep love for his fellow beings. Those thinkers who do not believe so will fall into contradiction when

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defending human rights. Thinkers like Huxley and Hume, who have expressed their hatred of slavery, cannot logically justify their defiance of slavery from an .anthropological aspect

Sometimes Whitehead speaks about man as if he sees man as a descendant of apes. :He says

Many years ago, the pressure of living in jungles forced some mammals to climb up“ trees and become apes; then, in the following era, after a long time, the pressure of the jungles being destroyed man the same species come down the trees and become ”.human beings

We must disagree with the theory that man is a kind of evolved animal, for there is no scientific reason to prove it; the above theory is more like a comparison, the base of .which cannot be proven

On the end of life, Whitehead discusses man's perfection, a perfection caused by :social measures

Life can be recognized only as aiming for the level of perfection that environmental“ conditions allow. The goal, however, is always far beyond facts available. The goal is achieving a kind of perfection and greatness, even if it proves to be degraded and ”.animal-like

Indeed, man must make objective effort toward perfection, but it is incorrect to claim that development and perfection depends on the environment. Some other thinkers also believe that human life is heading for an environmentally defined form of perfection. If environmental conditions mean people's normal wishes and thoughts on .the path of purely natural life, they cannot be regarded as perfection any more

In fact, man will achieve no

perfection unless he steps beyond his normal desires. Whitehead's main problem is his emphasis on the flow of man's normal, natural life, whereas he has frequently mentioned in his works that the current trend of life in human societies is not .compatible with supreme human ideals and realities

Another basic problem is Whitehead's ignorance toward the law of natural self-preservation. In our categorization of man's life, we have divided into two parts: the preservation of the natural aspect and the evolutionary aspect. Man's survival lies in :paying attention to the latter

Throughout this significant book, in which Whitehead has discussed some very important issues, I see no detailed discussion of the law of self-preservation, apart from a few brief statements, which will do no good to cure the pains deviation from .self-preservation brings about

Moral Ethics

:When discussing the greatness of Christianity and other religions, Whitehead says

”.The greatness of Christianity or any other religion lies in its temporary morals“

However, divine religions, Islam in particular, involve eternal morals, for moral ethics mean the activation and flourish of man's positive potentials, and moral values can :adjust man's social life. As the Holy Prophet of Islam has described his mission

بعثت لاتمم مكارم الاخلاق

”.I have been sent to complete moral virtues“

Despite his emphasis upon moral principles, Whitehead starts a contradiction :concerning morals

There is a contradiction concerning moral ethics that must be added to the“ contradiction in the arts. Moral issues seek an ideal in their goals, and fight against being degraded to lower levels, even when they are at

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their lowest level. Thus, stagnancy is the lethal enemy of moral ethics. Yet, in human ”.societies, heroes of morals are generally archenemies of new ideals

Great thinkers of moral issues have never opposed new ideals. Only professional heroes, who see moral issues as a mere series of principles, fight against change and new ideals. Great thinkers of moral ethics, however, see morals as dependent upon God, which can therefore never be rigid or stagnant. Moral ethics are based upon man's reasonable life, which is not stagnant. Man's relationship with nature and his fellow beings undergoes many changes, which cannot be left ignored in a system of moral ideals. The fundamental principles of moral ethics are fixed, of course, for they originate from man's nature, intellect and conscience; the changes that occur are changes in subject or man's viewpoint of facts. In brief, morals are based on reasonable life, and their aim is to evolve man's life – the supreme product of the universe. The moral values that dominate reasonable life can save man from .stagnancy

:All in all, Whitehead strongly believes in moral values

".The only way to understand a society is to find out what kind of men rule it"

Identifying the officials and leaders of a society can to some extent show us what the goal of the members of such a society is, and how freedom is in their society.

Freedom

We must put more emphasis upon mental freedom, which is the fundamental elixir of man's life and other forms of freedom.

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Mental freedom is not possible, however, without "practical, reasonable freedom." When such a freedom becomes a reality, man can use his positive potentials to the benefit of others. As Allamah Ja'fari believes, true freedom can exist in human societies only if the rulers of human societies admit and accept the greatness of human life.

Whitehead believes that the concept of freedom nowadays has become hollow:

"Alas, the concept of freedom has become hollow, due to the literary aspect given to it. Literary figures and artists have displayed the impact of new thoughts on traditional ones in their symphonies of imaginations and visual hallucinations."

The important point Whitehead is conveying here is that some literary figures and artists have damaged traditions and customs with their hallucinations presented in the name of novel thoughts. Novel thoughts, which are new and to some extent interesting have brought about the destruction of some traditions that are deeply rooted in man's mind and soul. One of the reasons why the last century was riddled with self-alienation is damaging original traditions.

From Whitehead's point of view, limited freedom does not only arise out of hostility and animosity toward one's fellow beings. Many other factors, such as the rigid rules of nature and the rules dominating man's life also limit freedom. Whitehead also emphasizes the important point that "the true core of freedom is the possibility to

reach ultimate human freedom. Man has suffered most due to his failure to reach his ".real goals

If this extremely significant point of Whitehead's is

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ignored, a reasonable interpretation of freedom will not be achieved. Nowadays, unfortunately, incorrect interpretations of freedom have led to man's supreme spiritual activities and heavenly ethics to be disabled. If Whitehead means by "the true core of freedom is the possibility to reach ultimate human freedom" the same as what the public mean by freedom – freedom is merely reaching their desires – however, we see it as a point deserving criticism. Some people set goals for themselves that are .by no means elevated or supreme, so reaching them cannot be regarded as freedom

Art

:Whitehead says that art consists of

Art consists of juxtaposing effects with observable facts objectively. By objective" juxtaposition, here we mean the ultimate that must be achieved with relative success. Such an ultimate, which refers to art, has two aspects – the truth and beauty. The "'.pinnacle of art has only one ultimate, and that is 'beauty based on the truth

Objectively juxtaposing effects with facts is not accurately the definition of art, for all of man's activities upon the contents of the world are objective. Every product or merchandise built, for example, has effects seen as some material phenomena in the world – a juxtaposition of the effects with the objective phenomena. And about the end of art, which Whitehead believes to be truth and beauty, we must say that the term "truth" here is not opposed to facts; rather, it refers to the "reality that deserves to exist," including the deserved existence of phenomena as they are

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.and as they should be

Art must flow on the path of man's reasonable life, and ignoring this fact can disable human principles and values by the artist and his works. Whitehead, who believes in :Judgment Day, considers art as responsible for making it a reality. He believes that

The concept of Judgment Day is quite significant, but that day is always with us." Thus, arts are liable for providing us with that now, immediately, in this world, so art itself has the potential to lose some of its profound viewpoint in order to achieve the providing responsibility it has set as its goal. The duty of the arts is to give Judgment ".Day triumphant reality now

Human Civilizations

:In his analysis of civilization, Whitehead believes it to consist of "four elements

Behavioral patterns -١

Emotional patterns -٢

Patterns of belief -٣

Technological patterns -۴

Though they influence each other, we can immediately omit technology, for it is" irrelevant to our discussions. On the long run, patterns of behavior are preserved or moderated or modified by the patterns of belief and emotions. Religion's first duty is ".to focus upon emotions and beliefs

Although Whitehead pays little attention to the element of technology, patterns of behavior are related to technology. The influence of technology upon man's individual and social life as so intense that it actually plays a part in determining man's patterns of behavior. Technology is not a phenomenon separate from legal or moral principles. .It is highly influential on public culture

And in the hands of the power-greedy men of politics

or business, it can heavily affect patterns of emotions and belief. Basically, technology makes people's social relationships very complicated, creating compulsory relationships that greatly influence various aspects of man's social life. Instead of ignoring technology, Whitehead should have advised it to be harnessed to serve .human life

The four elements mentioned above can only find harmony when the supreme aims of life and valuable ideals are presented. If man moves along the path of purely natural life instead of heading for reasonable life, they will never be harmonized. It is .religion that can correct and logically adjust the four patterns

Whitehead believes that the civilization of a society depends on the existence of five blessings: ۱. the truth, ۲. beauty, ۳. endeavor and innovation, ۴. art, ۵. peace and .tranquility

He sees triumph in encouraging and convincing force to work are signs of a valuable civilization. However, the value of a civilization lies in “spiritually and mentally ”.convincing human beings to a supreme state

Using force will make civilization inhibit the development of man's potentials. The mere convincing and satisfaction of the people is not enough to make a human civilization, for people are convinced and satisfied by factors in their life that cannot be regarded as ideal. For instance, some may be satisfied by hedonism; can that be considered as a human ideal? For years, people had accepted slavery, a form of content that no intellectual would approve of. Most people are generally ignorant of their own potentials and ideals, so people's

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satisfaction cannot be the correct criterion for evaluating a civilized society. A civilization whose points of strength root in original, stable human wishes will prevail. .Passive, mortal desires cannot be regarded as the real advantages of a civilization

By fulfilling encouragement, Whitehead most probably means activating original

needs and their saturation, which exist in man's nature. But since being content and the continual outpour of original needs and wishes are relative, and on the other hand, having in mind the crucial importance of lack of content, which Whitehead sees as one of the motivating factors of history, we should interpret the concept of being content here as pleasing ideals, for there is a concept of stagnancy and stop in being .content that is in contrast with the concept of sacred, motivating lack of content

Apart from the above-mentioned factors, Whitehead also mentions public beliefs. Social life depends on people's common beliefs, so "if a society is not continually filled ".with current public belief, its civilization will be destroyed

:Whitehead considers several factors as effective in the rise or fall of a civilization

۱- Elevated goals protect a civilization; without them, a civilization will "gradually turn ".into a vain repetition, in which the intensity of emotions slowly fades away

۲- The natural fatalism dominating man's physical life that fulfills man's physical .needs

۳- The compulsory dominance of man over man, to the extent that behaviors are .harmonized toward social comfort

۴- .Methods for fulfilling encouragement

The four factors mentioned above are acceptable, but the fifth one requires criticism. Public

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beliefs are not without deviations and errors, so intellectual pioneers of societies should always study and criticize them. Public beliefs can be divided into two groups. Some originate from man's nature, and some others, though not based on man's nature, deposit into his nature. The latter cannot guide man toward development and perfection. Nowadays, mechanistic life is full of such public beliefs. They must be .changed

:Whitehead thus assesses the Greek civilization

The Greek renaissance was caused by the factor of their ideal of perfection-seeking.“ This ideal brought them much greater progress and development than the other civilizations. It effectively made such a beautiful civilization that history had never ”.seen in man before

If Whitehead could only realize the glory and greatness of the Islamic civilization, he would never exaggerate like that about the Greek. The internal outpour and stable goals of the Islamic civilization were so great that the civilization was sustained and kept fresh for centuries. Whitehead admits that the Greek civilization lost its freshness to repetition in successive generations, whereas Islam, which believes that man always needs novelty and variety, and believes that man should be provided with a school of thought that prepares the grounds for man's thoughts and emotions to be refreshed and flourished, always inhibits man and his civilization from becoming stagnant and waning. In Islamic civilization, which is based on the existence of God, .man is guided toward goals and ideals that root deep inside him

Islam

Whitehead should be criticized on a few occasions for his lack

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of information about Islam. For instance, Whitehead has said that “Palestine has created the last religious ideology,” whereas religious ideology began with Noah, and continued with great prophets like Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, .presenting the complete context of Abraham's religion in the form of an ideology

Whitehead believes the scholars at the academies in Alexandria to have made a :significant contribution to the rising of Islam and Christianity

Their work [the scholars at Alexandria] found a strong position in the rise of two great“ religious revolutions, Islam and Christianity. They provided both religions with ”.philosophical theology and tools for innovation and dogmatic principles

It is absolutely unacceptable that the theological basis of Islam, or even Christianity, to have originated from Alexandria. Interaction of thoughts between scholars of various schools of thought and beliefs does not necessarily imply that one is based upon the other. Furthermore, Islamic theology is not founded upon innovations, or .dogmatic methods, either

According to Whitehead, slavery has been one of the issues in the past about which .none of the scholars of different schools of thought took any serious action

People of Athens were kept slaves, but apparently, they humanized the basis of“ slavery. Plato was, both by family background and in belief, an aristocrat, and must have had some slaves, too. But one can hardly read some of his words without feeling upset about how he forces mankind into humiliation... neither the sympathetic slavers, nor the aware Plato or even other intellectual lawmakers did anything to fight ".slavery

Whitehead knew

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nothing about how Islam fought against slavery, even though it was quite well-established among Arabs, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad took realistic measures :to eradicate it

Providing slaves with human rights -۱

Announcing the act of freeing slaves as a way to have one's sins forgiven -۲

Decreeing all slaves as free and slaving them prohibited after Mecca was occupied -۳

Allocating some zakat (alms) for freeing slaves -۴

Strong emphasis upon the merit of freeing slaves -۵

His actions were so effective that in Umar ibn Abdul-aziz's era, slavery had vanished from Islamic lands, and the budget for freeing slaves was spent on freeing non-

.Muslim slaves, e.g. in Africa

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

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Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism-places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,-web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and-English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

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:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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